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BY

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EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD
AUTHOR OF 'THE ATHANASIAN CREED' AND
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TO

MY MOTHER

# CONTENTS

## PART I.—THE HISTORY



## PART II.—THE TEACHING

# THE APOSTLES' CREED

## PART I. THE HISTORY

### CHAPTER I

#### THE EARLIEST HISTORY OF THE CREED

It is difficult to write a short history of the Apostles' Creed because, in its various stages of development, the Creed is bound up with the whole history of the Church from Apostolic times. To use one ancient interpretation of its Latin name, *symbolum*, it has been the banner carried at the head of the victorious army of Christ. As regimental banners display emblazoned the names of the great battles in which the regiment has won distinction, so do the creeds of particular Churches sum up in phrases added to the original form the history of dire conflicts in which Truth has painfully battled with Error. It is one thing to give the skeleton record of a series of campaigns with the dates and the names of commanders on both sides, and quite another to narrate the story of endurance and bravery which was shown on the toilsome march, and through night battles, and in the suffering of hardships, no less than in the clash of battle and the hour of victory. Just so we may in the compass of a few pages put together a record of skeleton creed-forms, with approximate dates and a few appropriate reflections. But this would be to leave the heart of the subject untouched. We desire to revivify the memories of the great crises when champions of Truth have been betrayed into inconsistencies, feebleness, and

folly, and nevertheless Truth has conquered. In a short history we must be content with mention of a few battles, which were decisive. This will suffice if the reader is led on to the study of the great issues involved in larger works, both on the creeds and on Church history in general.

Again, it is bewildering to a beginner to find out how many in number and how various in shape the early creed-forms are. So many new forms also have been found quite recently that it seems as if a large volume were needed to contain them, even without note or comment. Surely it is impossible to do justice to their manifold variety in a short work.

Further study, however, reveals the fact that they all follow one main line of development, that they can be easily classified, and that for beginners it is only necessary to know the chief types. The main line of development consists in the progressive interpretation of the Baptismal Formula 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.' The three chief classes are Baptismal Creeds, Conciliar Creeds, and Private or Individual Theological Professions. Our Apostles' Creed belongs to the first class, our Nicene Creed to both the first and the second, our (so-called) Athanasian Creed to the third. We are only at present concerned with the Apostles' Creed, so a very few words of explanation must suffice to show how the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds are related to it.

When the Nicene Council met in A.D. 325 Eusebius, the learned Bishop of Cæsarea, presented to it a form of faith which no doubt contained many phrases of the Baptismal Creed of Cæsarea, since he quoted it as such. But it really represented a theological essay, if I may use the term, designed by Eusebius to settle current disputes, both in the description given of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the abrupt termination of the form at the words 'And in the Holy Ghost.' There was no

controversy pending on the teaching of the third division of the Baptismal Creed. Eusebius therefore dropped the usual mention of the Church and the forgiveness of sins. The form in which it was proposed was not the form in which it was passed by the Council. It was emended and enlarged notably by the addition of the words 'of one substance' (*homoousios*) and 'of the substance of the Father,' round which controversy raged for a long time. A series of anathemas was also added condemning the main propositions of Arian theology.

Thus the original Nicene Creed was the first of a distinct class of Conciliar Creeds, which add to the simple statements of the ancient Historic Faith theological interpretations of a more or less intricate and speculative character. Many conservative theologians, of whom Eusebius himself was one, objected strongly to the use of any term such as *homoousios* (of one substance) because it was not found in Holy Scripture. But as time went on the wisdom of the Council was justified. A simple-minded bishop like Cyril of Jerusalem, whose first interest was in pastoral work, not in the region of speculative theology, came to see that such terms, though not Scriptural, were necessary to guard the sense of Scripture. So he revised the Creed of Jerusalem by the insertion of a section cut out of the Creed of the Nicene Council. His revision was received with approval by the Council of Constantinople in A.D. 381. At the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451 it was quoted side by side with the original Nicene Creed as the profession of the Council of Constantinople. They were referred to as the Creeds of 'the 318 holy fathers' and 'the 150 fathers' respectively. In their later history they were often confused, and their texts were altered by copyists to make them correspond more closely. But it was the revised Creed of Cyril which came into use as the Baptismal Creed of Constantinople and so of the whole

Eastern Church, was then introduced into the Liturgy, and with two additions[1] has come down to us as our Nicene Creed.

To make the case quite clear I will print the two forms side by side. The change in the pronouns from We to I does not represent a difference between Eastern and Western creeds, as is often asserted, but simply the difference between Conciliar and Baptismal Creeds.

| *Council of Nicæa*, A.D. 325. | *Council of Constantinople*, A.D. 381. *Council of Chalcedon*, A.D. 451. |
|---|---|
| We believe | We believe |
| I. 1. In one God the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible. | I. 1. In one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. |
| II. 2. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, both those in heaven and those on earth, | II. 2. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, [*God of God*], Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; |
| 3. Who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate, was made Man, | 3. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the |

[1] Printed in [ ].

| | |
|---|---|
| | Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, and was made Man, |
| 4. Suffered, | 4. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, |
| 5. And rose the third day, | 5. And rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures, |
| 6. Ascended into heaven, | 6. And ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, |
| 7. Is coming to judge quick and dead. | 7. And is coming again with glory to judge quick and dead, whose kingdom shall have no end. |
| III. 8. And in the Holy Ghost. | III. 8. And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father [*and the Son*], who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the Prophets, |
| | 9. In one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. |
| | 10. We acknowledge one baptism for remission of sins. |
| | 11. We look for the resurrection of the dead, |
| | 12. And the life of the world to come. |

It remains to say a word about Private Professions of Faith, which stray more or less from the beaten path of the ordinary Baptismal Creeds in order to emphasise what seem to the author to be important, or it may be neglected, aspects of Christian Truth. One of the earliest is the following from the pen of Gregory the Wonder-worker, a pupil of Origen :

*Gregory Thaumaturgus.*

'One God, Father of the living Word, (who is) wisdom subsisting, and of power, and of His eternal image, perfect begetter of (one who is) perfect, Father of (the) Only begotten Son, one Lord, sole from sole, God from God, Image and likeness of the Godhead, energising Word, Wisdom encircling the constitution of the Universe, and efficient power of the whole creation, very Son of (the) very Father, invisible of invisible, and incorruptible of incorruptible, and immortal of immortal, and eternal of eternal. And one Holy Spirit having his existence from God, and appearing through the Son, the Image of the Son, perfect (image) of perfect (Son); Life—the first cause of all that live; Holiness—the provider of hallowing, in whom is made manifest God the Father who is over all and in all, and God the Son who is through all; a complete Trinity, in glory and eternity and reign not divided nor estranged. There is therefore in the Trinity nothing created or serving, and nothing imported in the sense that it did not exist to start with, but at a later time made its way in; for never was there wanting Son to Father nor Spirit to Son, but there was always the same Trinity unchangeable and unalterable.'

Another is the famous letter of Pope Leo to Flavian which, as a masterly summary of the case against the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches, had great influence

on the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon, and on the balanced Definition of Faith which they published.

The Athanasian Creed is a similar Private Profession of Faith which was written some time in the fifth century[1] by a writer of the school of Lerins. It was an Instruction used for the benefit of a congregation or congregations in the south of France which in course of time came to be used as a canticle, and at its first introduction into Western service-books had precisely the same authority as the *Te Deum*. We are not concerned with its history except so far as it follows the line of the Apostles' Creed, quoting current Gallican teaching on the Descent into Hell, the Resurrection, and the Ascension. But it seems important, in view of modern controversies, to note how it should be classified. It is a Private Profession which was accepted from the tenth century throughout the Western Church as a useful paraphrase of their Baptismal Creed, just as they used the Baptismal Creed of the Eastern Church to enrich their Liturgy, without substituting either for the solemn act of Faith required from every Christian at his baptism and on his deathbed.

In the Prayer Book of the Church of England the Apostles' Creed is used with slight variations in the Order for Morning and Evening Prayer and in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick. It may be well to mark the variations which these forms present when compared with our Baptismal Creed, because they show to an observant eye how deeply rooted in the past history of the Church are those liturgical phrases which rise so readily to our lips, and should be more often pondered over in our hearts.

For example, the words 'after death' in our Baptismal

[1] In the opinion of Dom Morin the author was probably Cæsarius, Bishop of Arles.

Creed come to us from Gaul, whether directly or indirectly we do not know. They stood in the Creed of the Bangor Antiphonary in the seventh century, and may have come to us by some such Celtic channel. But this creed itself shows signs of Gallican origin, and the expression is found in other Gallican creeds, *e.g.* in the creed of the Church of Limoges,[1] and in an explanation of the Creed which has been traced to the pen of Magnus of Sens.[2] It came into our Interrogative Creed through the Sarum ritual.

These words are not anti-heretical or controversial. In English they form a cadence of real beauty which should fall on a thoughtful ear with a measured sound arresting attention. They bid us reflect on the passing of so many generations who have made this great act of faith before us with lips now silent in death. They unseal emotion when we are led on to think of the great mystery of life which in the unseen world is now to them revealed, which we hope to share with them in the Paradise of all Christ's saints.

| A | B |
|---|---|
| Baptismal Creed. (*Used also in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick.*) | Morning and Evening Prayer. |
| Dost thou believe | I believe |
| I. 1. in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth? | I. 1. in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth: |
| II. 2. And in Jesus Christ, His *only-begotten* Son, our Lord? | II. 2. And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, |

[1] Martene, i. 1, Art. xviii. Ord. 18.
[2] Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole*, p. 80.

| | |
|---|---|
| 3. *And that* He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, | 3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, |
| 4. *That He* suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried ; | 4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, |
| 5. *That* He *went down* into hell and *also* did rise again the third day, | 5. He descended into hell ; the third day He rose again from the dead, |
| 6. *That* He ascended into heaven | 6. He ascended into heaven, |
| 7. And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty ; | 7. And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father almighty ; |
| 8. *And* from thence shall come *again at the end of the world*, to judge the quick and the dead? | 8. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. |
| 9. And dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost ; | 9. I believe in the Holy Ghost ; |
| 10. The holy Catholic Church ; the communion of saints ; | 10. The holy Catholic Church ; the communion of saints ; |
| 11. *The remission* of sins ; | 11. The forgiveness of sins ; |
| 12. The resurrection of the *flesh* ; | 12. The resurrection of the body, |
| And everlasting life *after death*? | And the life everlasting. |
| *Ans.* All this I stedfastly believe. | |

In its present form (A) our Apostles' Creed has had a continuous history of some twelve hundred years. In the use of the Gallican Church, with omission of the words

'*maker of heaven and earth*,' it can be traced back for two hundred and eighty years further. But in the fifth century there were many other forms extant which, together with our form, seem to have been derived from a common archetype or parent. Of these the Old Roman Creed which comes to light in the fourth century was certainly the archetype of all Western forms. But the critics are not agreed that the Roman type was also the parent of Eastern forms, which some of them trace back to a common ancestor in Antioch or Asia Minor. These statements will become more intelligible as we proceed to deal—first, with the earliest history of Christian thought on the subject of belief, and then with selected types.

## § 1. The Evidence of the New Testament.

There is abundant evidence in the New Testament that the Apostles were agreed on an outline of teaching (Rom. vi. 17). The summaries of sermons of S. Peter and S. Paul in the Acts provide close parallels to the teaching of the Creed on the doctrine of God, the life and work of Christ, and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. But there is no suggestion of any fixed form of words in which the teaching might be summarised and committed to memory. S. Paul preaching to a cultured congregation at Athens seems free to alter the form of his discourse spontaneously, and uses a strain of thought quite different from that which he had used to the barbarian villagers at Lystra. Yet in both cases he began with the doctrine of the one true God, the Creator, in opposition to belief in numberless heathen deities. Only upon that foundation could he build safely the doctrine of the Son of God, in opposition to the hero-worship which had such a fascination for the pagan mind.

When the Apostles preached to Jews they had a common foundation of faith in the God of their fathers, and their message was at once of Jesus as the Messiah, crucified and risen from the dead, of repentance, of baptism for the remission of sins, of faith in His name as the motive power of moral conduct, of confession of that faith as the condition of spiritual health. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation* (Rom. x. 10).

The only trace of a form of creed is the simple confession of Jesus as the Lord, or the Son of God. In the words, *No man can say that Jesus is the Lord save in the Holy Ghost* (1 Cor. xii. 3), S. Paul traces faith to its source. Again he writes: *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved* (Rom. x. 9). He quotes the prophet Joel (ii. 32) as predicting *this word of faith,* and teaches that the Lord Jesus is one with the Lord Jehovah on whose name Joel bade his hearers call.

An attempt has been made to prove that the evidence of S. Paul's Epistles to Timothy points to a longer form. S. Paul reminds Timothy (1 Tim. vi. 13) of the confession before many witnesses which he had made, presumably at his baptism. He calls it *the beautiful confession* to which Christ Jesus has borne witness before Pontius Pilate, and charges him before God, who quickeneth all things, to keep the commandment. The simplest explanation of the confession which the Lord witnessed is this, that He avowed that He was a King (John xviii. 36). It does not seem possible to extract more from the words than the exhortation that Timothy should make a similar confession of Christ as King and Lord. Mention of Pilate was included in S. Paul's teaching, but not necessarily in his creed. The pattern of sound (Gr. healthful)

words which he bids Timothy hold (2 Tim. i. 13) *in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus,* seems to refer to the general content of the gospel which he preached. *Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel* (2 Tim. ii. 8). He bids him pass on the teaching heard from him *among many witnesses* to faithful men whom he in his turn is to put in remembrance. *I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word* (2 Tim. iv. 1, 2).

Some writers, piecing together these texts, have tried to reconstruct a primitive Apostles' Creed which they connect with the missionary Church of Antioch, by whom S. Paul was sent forth on his journeys. Dr. Zahn argues: 'If this is not all deceptive appearance, it must be taken as proved that the confession which Timothy made at his baptism before many witnesses referred first to God the Author of all life; secondly, to Jesus Christ; and that it described Him as "descended from David's seed," who stood "before Pontius Pilate," "was raised from the dead," who will some day appear again "to judge the quick and the dead."'[1]

It is admitted that nothing can be said about a third article of the Creed, though there is a reference to the Holy Ghost in the context of 2 Tim. i. 14. This is the weak point in the argument to prove that the Apostles had such a form, which became the parent of both Eastern and Western forms, and was reconstructed either in Rome or Asia Minor, chiefly by omission of any mention of the Davidic descent of Christ. We have to consider the possibility that the Apostolic Creed was a simple confession of Jesus as the Lord.

Important testimony is forthcoming from an unexpected

[1] *Apostles' Creed* (Eng. Trans.), p. 86.

quarter, the eunuch's confession in Acts viii. 37: 'I believe that Jesus is the Son of God.' It is true that it is found only in what is known as the Western text (Codex Bezae), and has been thrust into the margin of the Revised Version. But some think that this text represents S. Luke's original draft. And in any case it was known to Irenæus in this form, and may represent the form of Baptismal Confession in the Church of Asia Minor from which Irenæus drew his tradition.

The suggestion is confirmed by the evidence of the Johannine Epistles: *Whosoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God* (1 John iv. 15). The aorist tense used in the Greek text points to a single definite act, the confession from which the divine indwelling is dated.

In another passage the context is important, as showing the drift of thought. Jesus has been proved to be the Christ historically by water and blood, His baptism and His crucifixion. He now works in the Church, not only in the water of baptism, but also by cleansing in His blood. Thus S. John leads up to the thought of the Baptismal Confession: *This is the victory that overcame the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* (1 John v. 5).

Similar evidence may be gathered from the Epistle to the Hebrews: *Having therefore a great High Priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession* (Heb. iv. 14).

I regard these texts as proving conclusively that the earliest creed of the Church was this simple statement: 'I believe that Jesus is the Lord (*or* the Son of God).' Belief in the Person of Christ leads on to belief in the words of Christ. The later creed has been made by expansion of this form in combination with the Baptismal

Formula: *In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost* (Matt. xxviii. 19).

Some writers maintain that the original form of the Baptismal Formula also was Christological and not Trinitarian, *in the name of Jesus* (or *the Lord Jesus*). They appeal to the following passages: Acts ii. 38, viii. 16, x. 48, xix. 5; Rom. vi. 3; Gal. iii. 27. On the other hand, all these references to baptism in (or into) the name of the Lord Jesus may refer, not to the Baptismal Formula, but either to the confession made by the baptized, or to the new relationship into which they were brought on becoming 'members of Christ.'

The disciples of John the Baptist whom S. Paul met at Ephesus (Acts xix. 3) told him that they had been baptized *into the baptism of John.* This does not mean that John used the formula: 'I baptize into the name of John,' for we gather from S. Paul's reply that John said, 'for repentance.' But the disciples of John seem to have confessed themselves such, just as Corinthian partisans (1 Cor. i. 12-18) labelled themselves disciples of Cephas, or Apollos, or Christ, or Paul. Why, then, should not the words that follow, '*they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus,*' be taken to refer to their personal confession of faith. Indeed the pains which S. Paul took to instruct them about the Holy Spirit seem to imply that Trinitarian teaching was actually given them.[1]

Before leaving the New Testament we must note that there are other set types of teaching, which have not come under consideration, and may possibly have belonged to the earliest catechetical teaching. Thus we find teaching cast in the form of a chronicle (Mark xvi.

[1] For fuller treatment of this subject, cf. my *Introduction*, p. 20 ff.; and for a full defence of the authenticity of Matthew xxviii. 19, *vide* Riggenbach, *Der Trinitarische Taufbefehl*, Gütersloh, 1903.

9 ff.), or in the form of a chronicle with short proofs (1 Cor. xv. 3-7). In 1 Peter iii. 18 the scheme is moulded on the antithesis *according to the flesh—according to the spirit*, and the Apostle has instruction of candidates for baptism in his mind. Having spoken of Christ as suffering for sins, he contrasts His death in the flesh with His quickening in the spirit, and his mention of the salvation of Noah's family in the ark as a type of baptism leads up to the mention of *the question and answer* (R. V. interrogation) *of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ: who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven* (1 Peter iii. 21, 22).

We also come across fragments of primitive Christian hymns, such as 1 Tim. iii. 16:

*He who was manifested in the flesh,*
*justified in the spirit,*
*seen of angels,*
*preached among the nations,*
*believed on in the world,*
*received up in glory.*

But such fragments stand in no relation to the subsequent development of creed-forms and need not detain us.

## § 2. The Apostolic Fathers.

The so-called Apostolic Fathers are the generation of Christian teachers who were pupils and immediate successors of the Apostles.

Clement, Bishop of Rome, wrote an Epistle to the Corinthians in which are contained important statements of faith in the Trinity, but no obvious parallel to a creed-form. 'Have we not,' he writes, 'one God, and one Christ, and one Spirit of grace, which was poured out upon us?' (Cor. xlvi. 6). And again: 'As God lives,

and the Lord Jesus Christ lives, and the Holy Spirit, the faith and hope of the elect' (Cor. lviii. 2). He claims for the Son and the Spirit, just as S. Paul had claimed in the benediction of his Second Epistle to the Corinthians (2 Cor. xiii. 13), a personal life distinguished from that of the Father, and yet Divine.

The parallels in the Epistles of Ignatius the Martyr Bishop of Antioch are much more definite. They form a connecting-link between the teaching of S. Paul's letters to Timothy and the early, perhaps earliest Creed, which we shall presently discuss as the Old Roman Creed.

To the Ephesians, c. 18: 'For our God, Jesus the Christ, was conceived in the womb by Mary according to a dispensation, of the seed of David but also of the Holy Ghost; and He was born and was baptized that by His passion He might cleanse water.'

To the Trallians, c. 9: 'Be ye deaf, therefore, when any man speaketh to you apart from Jesus Christ, who was of the race of David, who was the Son of Mary, who was truly born and ate and drank, was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and died in the sight of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the earth; who, moreover, was truly raised from the dead, His Father having raised Him, who in the like fashion will so raise us also who believe on Him—His Father, I say, will raise us—in Christ Jesus, apart from whom we have not true life.'

To the Smyrnæans, c. 1: 'I have perceived that ye are established in faith immovable, being, as it were, nailed on the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, in flesh and in spirit, and firmly grounded in love in the blood of Christ, fully persuaded as touching our Lord that He is truly of the race of David according to the flesh, but Son of God by the Divine will and power, truly born of a virgin and baptized by John that *all righteousness might*

*be fulfilled* by Him, truly nailed up in the flesh for our sakes under Pontius Pilate and Herod the Tetrarch (of which fruit are we — that is, of His most blessed passion); that *He might set up an ensign* unto all the ages through His resurrection, for His saints and faithful people, whether among Jews or among Gentiles, in one body of His Church.'

In the Epistle (to the Philippians) of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, the friend and pupil of Ignatius, there is very little to be gleaned. He lays stress (c. 2) on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead in words taken from 1 Peter, and (c. 7) urges confession of Jesus Christ come in the flesh, and the witness of the Cross, echoing 1 John iv. 2-4.

Equally disappointing is the *Didache*, a Jewish manual edited by a Christian writer, which, however, quotes (c. 7) the Baptismal Formula, and side by side with it (c. 9) the phrase 'those baptized into the name of the Lord,' where the reference seems clearly to be not to a formula of baptism but to a form of confession, or to the new relationship to the Lord into which the baptized are brought.

Our conclusion is that the Apostles' Creed did not exist in Apostolic times, though the substance of its teaching was primitive. The Ignatian epistles prove that instruction was given in Antioch on many points characteristic of the teaching of the developed creed, the miraculous birth, the crucifixion, the resurrection. We also find mention of *the Catholic Church*, in the primitive sense of the word *catholic=universal*, as of the forgiveness of sins and of the hope of resurrection, but the teaching on these points is not connected with faith in the Holy Ghost nor joined in any way with the Christological teaching so as to suggest the existence of a developed creed-form.

## § 3. The Apologists.

We turn next to the Apologists of the second century: (1) Justin Martyr, (2) Aristides, (3) Irenæus. This is the most difficult stage of our inquiry. It is so easy to strain the evidence and by arbitrary critical processes compile a creed of Ephesus from Justin Martyr or a creed of Gaul from Irenæus. I believe myself, with Dr. Kattenbusch, that both Justin Martyr and Irenæus were acquainted with the old Roman Creed. But it seems fairest to quote the most important passages as they stand.

### (1) *Justin Martyr.*

Justin Martyr's evidence may be quoted under two heads: (*a*) Expansions of the Baptismal Formula; (*b*) Specimens of Christological teaching.

(*a*) *Apol.* i. 61: 'For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water.'

*Ib. ad fin.*: 'And in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Ghost . . . he who is illuminated is washed.'

(*b*) Specimens of Christological teaching. These may be arranged with reference to (i) general teaching on the Incarnation; (ii) the fulfilment of prophecy; (iii-iv) the history of the Lord Jesus; (v) a prayer of exorcism; (vi) an old Testament type.

(i) *Apol.* i. 21: 'We say also that the Word, who is the first-born of God, was produced without sexual union, and that He, Jesus Christ, our teacher, was crucified and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven.'

(ii) *Ib.* 31: 'In these books, then, of the prophets we found Jesus our Christ foretold as coming, born of a virgin, growing up to man's estate, and healing every disease and every sickness, and raising the dead, and being hated, and unrecognised, and crucified, and dying, and rising again, and ascending into heaven, and being, and being called the Son of God.'

(iii) *Ib.* 42: 'But our Jesus Christ, being crucified and dead, rose again, and having ascended to heaven, reigned.'

(iv) *Ib.* 46: 'Through the power of the Word, according to the will of God the Father and Lord of all, He was born of a virgin as a man, and was named Jesus, and was crucified and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven.'

(v) *Dial.* 85: 'For every demon, when exorcised in the name of this very Son of God—who is the First-born of every creature, who became man by the Virgin, who suffered and was crucified under Pontius Pilate by your nation, who died, who rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven—is overcome and subdued.'

(vi) *Ib.* 132: 'It conduces to your hereby knowing Jesus, whom we also know to have been Christ the Son of God, who was crucified, and rose again, and ascended to heaven, and will come again to judge all men, even up to Adam himself.'

The variety of context in which these phrases occur renders it unlikely that Justin's personal creed contained more than 'Jesus is the Christ the Son of God.' In his *Dialogue* (64) the Jew Trypho is represented as connecting the thought of confession with prayer to Christ: 'We do not need confession of Him nor worship.' In the same *Dialogue* (35) Justin shows that the preaching of Jesus crucified leads up to confession of Him as Lord and Christ: 'confessing that they themselves are Chris-

tians and to confess that the crucified Jesus is both Lord and Christ.' Again he writes (*Dial.* 47) of guarding such a confession 'in the Christ of God.'

At the same time full consideration should be given to the coincidences of language by which Dr. Kattenbusch seeks to prove Justin's acquaintance with the Old Roman Creed. In a quotation of Matt. xvi. 21 = Mark viii. 31 = Luke ix. 22 Justin (*Dial.* 51, 76, 100) uses the word *crucified* in place of the 'be killed' of the *Textus receptus*. This is followed by 'rose the third day,' where Mark has 'and after three days rise again,' Matthew and Luke have 'and on the third day be raised.' Justin also speaks confidently of 'the resurrection of the flesh' as a part of orthodox Christian belief' (*Dial.* 80). It is difficult to convey the force of such arguments from Greek phrases to English readers. But even when Justin's acquaintance with the Old Roman Creed is accepted it does not follow that it had yet come into use in Asia Minor.

On the other hand Dr. Zahn thinks that Justin was quoting his own creed of Ephesus and that it included the word 'dead' between 'crucified' and 'buried.' He calls attention to the reply of the Presbyters of Smyrna, a city near of Ephesus, who *c.* A.D. 180, in opposition to the heresy of Noetus, confessed 'Suffered, dead, risen again the third day.' But the word 'dead' is very rare in creeds till a much later time, so that this is no proof that Justin and the Smyrnæans were quoting from an Eastern creed parallel to that of Rome.

### (2) *Aristides.*

The testimony of the Apologist Aristides of the date A.D. 140-148 is extant in three fragments of the Greek original and of Syriac and Armenian versions. The following passage suggests that Aristides like Justin

confessed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, while at the same time he taught plainly enough His pre-existence and His birth of a Virgin: 'The Christians then are race-reckoned from the Lord Jesus Christ. He, the Son of God Most High, is confessed in the Holy Spirit to have come down from heaven for the salvation of men; and was born of a holy virgin . . . took flesh and was manifested to men.'

### (3) *Irenæus.*

Irenæus, the great Bishop of Lyons, was a native of Asia Minor, who in his youth, before his migration to Gaul, had been a pupil of Polycarp. He was sent on an important mission to Rome, where he lectured against heresies. The times were critical. The rise of the Gnostic heresy, which was a movement among Gentile Christians, threatened to subvert the Christian faith from its foundations. It was an attempt to solve the problem of the origin of evil on pagan lines by attributing all the sin of the world to an intermediate deity, or Demiurge, who was imagined to oppose the supreme Good God. The Demiurge was identified with the God of the Jews. Christ as the Only-begotten Son was described as an emanation from Heavenly Powers, themselves emanations from the Supreme, who came into the world to deliver mankind from the oppression of the Demiurge.

The following passages prove that Irenæus taught on the lines of the developed creed, though the fact that the Holy Ghost is not mentioned in his Rule of Faith, after detailed teaching on the Incarnation, appears to make it improbable that his personal creed was more than the short Christological confession: 'I believe that Jesus is the Son of God.' At the same time there are many

phrases which point to acquaintance with the Old Roman Creed. The following is the most important passage, *c. Haer,* i. 10:

'The Church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the Apostles and their disciples this faith: [She believes] in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and the sea and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God and the advents, and the birth from a Virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus our Lord, and His [future] manifestation from heaven in the glory of the Father to gather all things in one, and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race in order that, to Christ Jesus our Lord and God and Saviour and King, according to the will of the invisible Father "every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess to Him," and that He should execute just judgment towards all.'

# CHAPTER II

## EARLY CREED-FORMS AND THEORIES ABOUT THEIR ORIGIN

At the present stage of investigation into the history of the Apostles' Creed it is important to keep an open mind, free to consider the bearings of any new evidence which may be forthcoming. But the uncertainty which is attached to the theories about their origin does not belong to the early creed-forms themselves, and for practical purposes one theory is as good as another. It is agreed, for example, that the Old Roman Creed goes back to the first years of the second century. Whether we can trace a sister or parent creed of Antioch thirty years further back or not, or even if the parent of both is to be found in Asia Minor, the common tradition which they hand down represents a summary of Apostolic teaching in the generation following the Apostles, preserved from a date preceding the formation of the New Testament Canon. The Creed and the New Testament are supplementary. We may prove the truth of the witness of the Church as expressed in the Creed out of the Bible records, but even if the records had perished the witness of the Creed would have remained permanent, irrefragable.

### 1. The Old Roman Creed.

The history of the Old Roman Creed is best studied backwards. During the ages of persecution when the Church became of necessity a secret society, hiding

jealously its books and its holy mysteries, the Creed was used as a 'password' by which a Christian could make himself known in a community to which he was a stranger. And the custom grew up which lasted on even to the fifth century, when Christianity had for many years been a permitted religion, of warning candidates for baptism that they should never write down the articles of their belief but treasure them written in their heart. This fact explains the difficulty of tracing back creed-forms in early times when Christian writers shrank from open quotation of that which they treasured as a mystery, according to one meaning of the old Latin *sacramentum*, a sacrament.

Thus in the fourth century the Old Roman Creed comes to light in the writings of Marcellus of Ancyra and of Rufinus of Aquileia. In the year A.D. 340 Marcellus, Bishop of Ancyra, was exiled from his diocese by Arian intrigues, and came to stay with Bishop Julius of Rome. Before his return home in the following year he left with his host a profession of his faith, which might be used by his friends in his defence, and has been preserved by the historian Epiphanius.[1] This was the Old Roman Creed which Marcellus accepted and made his own,[2] using the Greek text which in all probability comes down from the days when the earliest Roman Church was a Greek-speaking community to which S. Paul naturally wrote his epistle in Greek. Of course the Roman Christians must always have been bilingual, and the Old Latin text is probably as ancient as the Greek.

[1] *Haer.* lxxii.

[2] It was Archbishop Ussher who first pointed this out. There are two slight variations in the text quoted by Marcellus, the omission of the word 'Father' in Art. 1, and the addition of the words 'eternal life' in Art. 12, which are probably mistakes of copyists of the treatise of Epiphanius.

Sixty years later (A.D. 400) Rufinus, a priest of Aquileia, wrote a commentary on the creed of his native city, comparing it with the Old Roman Creed. He was a man who had travelled much and was well read. He believed that the Roman Creed was the actual Apostles' Creed which the Twelve had composed in solemn conclave before they left Jerusalem. He explained that while other Churches added clauses to meet different heresies the Roman Church had remained free from heresy, and had kept up the custom that those who are going to be baptized should rehearse the Creed publicly, that is in the audience of the people, 'the consequence of which is that the ears of those who are already believers will not admit the addition of a single word.'[1] We need not accept the legend of Apostolic authorship, of which earlier writers, men of more acumen than Rufinus, do not seem to have heard. It was afterwards transferred to the later creed-form which has become our Received Text of the Creed, and in many old MSS. the different clauses are distributed among the Apostles sometimes in one order of the names and sometimes in another! Though it was true that the Roman Church was comparatively free from the attacks of heresy in Arian times, this was not the case in the second century when, though Rufinus did not know it, Rome as the capital of the Empire was the meeting-ground of every conceivable heresy and superstition, pagan as well as Christian. Rufinus is quite correct, however, in his statement about the solemn ceremony of the Repetition of the Creed by Candidates for Baptism. Though not peculiar to Rome it was specially observed there. There is an interesting passage in Augustine's *Confessions*[2] in which he describes the sensation made when Victorinus, who had

[1] *Comm.* c. 3.

[2] Quoted below, p. 113.

been a famous teacher of Neo-Platonism, rose to make his profession of faith.

THE OLD ROMAN CREED.

I. 1. I believe in God (the)[1] Father almighty;

II. 2. And in Christ Jesus His only Son our Lord,
3. Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
4. crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried,
5. the third day He rose from the dead,
6. He ascended into heaven,
7. sitteth at the right hand of the Father,
8. thence He shall come to judge living and dead.

III. 9. And in the Holy Ghost,
10. (the) holy Church,
11. (the) remission of sins,
12. (the) resurrection of the flesh.

We can trace back this Old Roman Creed in the writings of Felix, Bishop A.D. 269-274, and of Dionysius, Bishop *c.* A.D. 259. There is also an interesting quotation in the writing of Novatian, a priest of the Roman Church, *On the Trinity*:

'The Rule of Truth demands that first of all we should believe in God the Father and Lord Almighty; to believe also in the Son of God, Christ Jesus our Lord God, but Son of God . . . of Mary . . . about to rise from the dead . . . about to sit at the right hand of the Father judge of all; to believe also in the Holy Spirit . . . who guards the Church in holiness of truth . . . who brings forth our bodies for resurrection of immortality.'

[1] I have quoted the definite article in brackets where it is not found in the Greek text of Marcellus. The Latin language having no article, it is a question how the Latin text should be translated.

At the end of the second century Tertullian, a Carthaginian lawyer, who had been ordained priest in Rome, and afterwards lapsed into the heresy known as Montanism, expresses the agreement of the African Church with the Church of Rome in matters of faith. His heresy, which was mainly an unbalanced opinion on the measure of inspiration accorded by the Holy Spirit to Montanus and other Christian prophets, does not render his statements on the Creed suspicious. He calls the creed the watchword which the African Church shares with the Roman, also the Rule of Faith, and the oath of allegiance (*Sacramentum*) imposed on the Christian soldier at the font. In the following passage he appears to give to sacrament the meaning of an outward sign of an inward grace. The Creed is the sign; faith enlarged by knowledge of the whole scheme of redemption is the grace which clothes the soul. The Baptismal Formula supplies the framework, and the Birth, Passion, and Resurrection of the Lord are included in it.

*De Bapt.* 13: 'Grant that, in days gone by, there was salvation by means of bare faith, before the passion and resurrection of the Lord. But now that faith has been enlarged, and is become a faith which believes in his nativity, passion, and resurrection, there has been an amplification added to the sacrament, [namely], the sealing act of baptism; the clothing, in some sense, of the faith which before was bare, and which cannot exist now without its proper law. For the law of baptizing has been imposed, and the formula prescribed: "Go," saith He, "teach the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."'

This corresponds to another passage, in which Tertullian speaks of threefold immersion, while reciting rather more than the Lord appointed in the Gospel. Taken together with the following two parallels, these statements leave little or no doubt in one's mind as to the form of creed which Tertullian used.

*De uirg. uel.* 1: 'The rule of faith indeed is one altogether . . . of believing in one God almighty, maker of the world, and in His Son Jesus Christ, born of Mary the Virgin, crucified under Pontius Pilate; the third day raised from the dead, received in the heavens, sitting now at the right hand of the Father, about to come to judge quick and dead, through the resurrection also of the flesh.'

*De Praescr.* 36: 'What the (Roman) Church has made a common token with the African Churches: has recognised one God, creator of the universe, and Christ Jesus, of the Virgin Mary, Son of God the creator, and the resurrection of the flesh.

From Tertullian we learn much about the famous Gnostic Marcion. What made opposition to Marcion most difficult was the fact that he still held to the Roman Creed interpreted in his own way. Tertullian felt this with regard to Valentinus,[1] and it embittered his opposition to Marcion. He writes that Marcion had not so much innovated upon the rule of faith by the separation of the law and the gospel, as he had taken trouble for its adulteration, and that 'after the Apostles' times truth suffered adultery concerning the Rule of God.'[2]

In one passage of Marcion's revised New Testament he writes about the two covenants, combining Gal. iv. 24 with Eph. i. 21: 'The one from Mount Sinai, which is the synagogue of the Jews after the law, begotten into bondage; the other, which is exalted above all might, majesty, and power, and over every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; which (covenant) is the mother of us all, which begets us in the holy Church, which we have acknowledged (or to which we have vowed allegiance).'

Dr. Zahn[3] points out that Marcion does not say, or rather does not allow the Apostle to say, 'which we

[1] *Ad Valent.*, 1. [2] *Adv. Marc.*, i. 21.
[3] *The Apostles' Creed* (Eng. trans.), p. 66 f.

acknowledge,' but he looks back to the confession and the oath taken once for all at baptism with reference to the holy Church. The same word had been used by Ignatius of the oath taken on the confession of the Christian faith. It follows that the words 'holy Church' were contained in the Roman Creed before Marcion's breach with the Church in A.D. 145.

Thus we trace the Old Roman Creed up to the earliest years of the second century, and ask the question whether Rufinus was right after all in saying that it had remained unchanged? The evidence of Tertullian, and of Irenæus also, seems to point to the addition of the word 'one' in the first Article, which is found in all Eastern forms of the Creed. If the word once stood there, can we explain its omission from the time of Novatian?

From Tertullian we learn that certain leaders of thought in the Roman Church had been strongly influenced by a strain of teaching which confused the Persons of the Godhead. Zephyrinus is reported to have said: 'I believe in one God, Jesus Christ.' His successor, Callistus, attempted to make a compromise, distinguishing Christ the Divine from Jesus the human. He was at once denounced by the teacher Sabellius, from whom the heresy derived the name Sabellianism. Sabellius asserted that the Trinity represented successive aspects of the one Godhead, God having been manifested first as Father, then as Son, then as Holy Spirit. Under these circumstances it would not be surprising if the word 'one' were omitted from the first Article of the Creed to counteract such teaching. In the history of Eusebius[1] the heretics of this period are said to have accused the Roman Church of recoining the truth like

[1] *Hist. Eccl.*, v. 28, 3, 13.

forgers. Dr. Zahn suggests that this is a reference to the alteration of the Creed.

The internal evidence of the Creed points to the early years of the century, ± 100 A.D., as the date of its composition. The simplicity and terseness of the style point to the sub-Apostolic age. There is no mention of God's work in creation which was generally included in outlines of Christian doctrine after the rise of Gnosticism. Its authorship remains unknown, but it seems to have become a rule of faith without dispute. 'From Tertullian's description we are led to call it simply "the Faith," a short and intelligible summary of the teaching which Christianity offered. Its terse and rhythmical sentences were not unworthy of the great apostles S. Peter and S. Paul, who had laboured and suffered in the imperial city. We may even conjecture that they helped not a little to mould the noble traditions of faith and learning which through centuries to come enhanced the reputation of the holy Roman Church. It may fitly be called an Apostolic Creed, because it contains the substance of apostolic teaching, and is the work of a mind separated only by one generation from the apostles.'[1]

## 2. The Old Creed of Jerusalem.

We turn next to the Old Creed of Jerusalem which we find imbedded in the catechetical lectures of Cyril, who was Bishop of Jerusalem in the fourth century. Cyril quotes two forms. The first, which is very short, was used apparently at the moment of Baptism. He reminds the newly baptized how they renounced Satan and all his works, turning to the West as the land of darkness. Then turning to the East, as the land of

[1] *Vide* my *Introduction*, p. 65.

light, they said: 'I believe in the Father and in the Son and in the Holy Spirit, and in one baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.' We might almost imagine that this form takes us back to the days when S. Peter preached his first sermon in Jerusalem. The longer form, like a geological map of the different strata on the earth's surface, records the history of its gradual formation. The titles 'Only-begotten' and 'Paraclete,' given to the Son and the Holy Spirit, point to the teaching of S. John; the word 'catholic' to the times of Ignatius; the words 'whose kingdom shall have no end' look like a recent addition to counteract the teaching of Marcellus of Ancyra.[1] But the relation of the longer form to the shorter is shown by the order of Articles 11 and 10, in which the words 'one baptism for the remission of sins' precede the words 'and in one holy Catholic Church,' the rest of this division of the Creed having been built up, so to speak, round the earlier form.

THE OLD CREED OF JERUSALEM (*c.* A.D. 345).

Cyril, *Cat.* vi.-xviii.

I. 1. We believe in one God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

II. 2. And in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God the only begotten, begotten of the Father, true God, before all the ages, through whom all things were made;

3. incarnate and living as man among men;

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[1] Marcellus in his later years pressed unduly the words of S. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 28: 'Then shall the Son also himself be subject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.' He taught that the Son would return to God and become the immanent Logos or Word of God, the silent thinking principle which is in God, losing all distinction as the Son. Thus, like Sabellius, Marcellus 'confused the Persons.'

4. crucified and buried,
5. And rose again the third day,
6. And ascended into heaven,
7. And sat on the right hand of the Father,
8. And shall come in glory to judge the quick and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end.

III. 9. And in one Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, who spake by the Prophets,
10. And in one baptism of repentance for remission of sins,
11. And in one holy Catholic Church,
12. And in resurrection of the flesh,
And in life eternal.

The point which I have singled out, the order of clauses 10 and 11, in which 'remission of sins' precedes 'holy Catholic Church,' leaves no doubt in my mind that we have to do with a case of development on independent lines. If this longer form had been dependent on the Roman Creed, mention of Pilate would have been included. The fact that it appears in the Revised Creed of Jerusalem (*i.e.* our Nicene Creed) does not prove that it belonged to the earlier form. Cyril, if we may credit him with the authorship, was in that respect conforming to the Western type, as in changing 'resurrection of the flesh' into 'resurrection of the dead' he followed current Eastern mode of thought.

Such questions lead to abstruse lines of argument in which the ordinary reader cannot be expected to take much interest. The specialists have by no means said the last word on the subject. The two conflicting theories may be briefly described as follows.

Dr. Kattenbusch, with whom Dr. Harnack is in general agreement, takes as his working hypothesis the proposition that the Old Roman Creed lies at the base of

all like-constructed creeds. His critics agree that this is true of all Western forms, but maintain that there is evidence as to the existence of an Eastern type of creed of equal antiquity, but distinguished from the Roman Creed by such phrases as 'one (God),' 'Maker of heaven and earth,' 'suffered,' 'shall come again in glory.' Dr. Kattenbusch traces all the Eastern creeds of the fourth century to one archetype in the Creed of Antioch which, according to his view, is dependent on the Roman Creed. He conjectures that the Roman Creed was introduced at Antioch after the deposition of the heretic Paul of Samosata (*c.* A.D. 272), that it was altered to meet the dogmatic necessities of the time, that it then became the parent of the creeds of Palestine and Asia Minor and Egypt in the following century. In the case of Egypt, for example, there is evidence of the existence of a shorter form based on the Baptismal Formula like the short form quoted by Cyril,[1] which seems to prove the wide extension of such usage in Eastern Churches.

On the other hand, Dr. Kunze and Dr. Loofs in Germany, Dr. Sanday in England, head an opposition to this theory. Dr. Kunze[2] reconstructs the Antiochian Creed of the third century as follows:

CREED OF ANTIOCH.

I. 1. I believe in one and an only true God, Father Almighty, maker of all things, visible and invisible.

II. 2. And in our Lord Jesus Christ, His Son, the only-begotten and first-born of all creation, begotten of Him before

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[1] The Egyptian Church Order has a form which has been translated from the Coptic as follows:—'I believe in the true God alone, the Father, the Almighty; and His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour; and in His Holy Spirit the all-lifegiving.

[2] *Theol. Litteraturblatt.*, xxiii. 19, 221.

all the ages, through whom also the ages were established, and all things came into existence;

3. Who, for our sakes, came down, and was born of Mary the Virgin,
4. And crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried,
5. And the third day rose according to the scriptures,
6. And ascended into heaven.
7.
8. And is coming again to judge quick and dead.
9. [The beginning of the third article has not been recorded.]
10.
11. Remission of sins,
12. Resurrection of the dead, life everlasting.

Again Dr. Loofs[1] selects the following phrases as typical of creeds which go back to a date preceding the Nicene Council. The creeds which he selects are: the Creed which Eusebius presented to the Nicene Council; the revised Creed of Cyril of Jerusalem; the Creed of Antioch quoted by Cassian, a Gallican writer of the latter part of the fourth century; the Creed of the Apostolic Constitutions, a Syrian compilation written in Antioch *c.* A.D. 375; the Creed of Lucian the Martyr, generally called the second Creed of Antioch; the Creed of Arius, which he presented to Constantine in A.D. 330. Arranging these in tabular form we notice the grouping.

A Eusebius (Cæsarea).
B Cyril (Jerusalem).
C Antioch (Cassian).
D Apostolic Constitutions (Antioch).
E Lucian the Martyr (Antioch).
F Arius.

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[1] *Symbolik*, i. 19.

1. One (God), A, B, C, D, E, F.
   Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible (or a like phrase), A, B, C, D, E.
2. Lord Jesus Christ, His Son, the only-begotten (or a like phrase), A, B, C, D, E, F.
3. Crucified under Pontius Pilate, B, C, D. (A, E, F omit because they are theological creeds. Dr. Loofs thinks that it does not follow that the words were omitted by the Baptismal Creeds on which they were based.)
5. Rose the third day, A, B, D, E. (F omits 'the third day,' being a theological creed; the translation of C is uncertain.)
6. Went up, A, B, D, E, F.
   +and . . . and . . . and, A, B, C, D, E, F.
8. And is coming, B, C, D, E, F; and is about to come, A; +again, A, C, D, E, F (B?); +in glory, A, B; with glory, D, E.
10. +catholic, B, D, F (A, C, E?).
12. +life eternal, B, C; +life of the age to come, D, F.

I think that this is a fair way of putting the case on this side without encumbering my pages with a number of creed-forms. The real battle-ground of the future between the opposing theories lies in the testimony of Irenæus. He has most of the characteristic expressions of the Eastern creeds. He inserts 'one' in clauses 1 and 2. He has the phrase 'maker of heaven and earth,' adding 'and the sea and all things that are in them.' He has 'suffered' and 'crucified' with 'under Pontius Pilate' after instead of before it. Probably also he had 'in glory' in clause 8. The only characteristic of the oldest form of the Western Creed in Irenæus is Christ Jesus (for Jesus Christ). Dr. Sanday thinks that this may belong to the primitive Creed, but that Irenæus brought to Gaul from his home in Smyrna an Eastern

type which had already diverged from the primitive form.[1] He does not discuss the possibility that Irenæus brought the Roman Creed from Rome, or the possibility that the phrases which remind us of the Eastern type really belong not to his creed but to the customary forms of catechetical teaching on the person of Christ. These forms tended to crystallise everywhere, and we find S. Paul quoting from such a form in 1 Cor. xv. 3-7.

The practical question, however, for the ordinary reader is not affected by his doubts concerning either or both of these theories. The plain fact remains that the old Roman Creed was taught in Rome, and that the same facts were taught in Palestine (Antioch), Asia Minor, and Egypt, whether they were gathered up in a parallel creed-form or not.

We have now traced the history of the Old Roman Creed from the beginning of the second century to the end of the fourth, and have observed how very slight are the variations which appear to have taken place in its form. Side by side, however, with the almost immutable Creed of Rome there existed in other Western Churches many daughter forms, so to speak, which were enlarged, or in some cases enriched, by additional clauses. Thus the Creed of Aquileia, the native city of Rufinus, had in the first clause the epithets *invisible* and *impassible*. Again, in clause 4 the words *descended into hell* were added to *buried*. This is still the earliest known Baptismal Creed in which the words occur, though they are found in a recently discovered creed of S. Jerome[2] and in manifestoes issued by three Arian Synods of the years 359 and 360. Rufinus himself regarded the words as an extension of the idea *buried*. They may have been added to emphasise the truth that the Lord really died in opposition to Docetic denials, which would imply that

[1] *Journal of Theological Studies*, i. 3. [2] See p. 43.

His Body was a mere phantom. But it is more probably that they were intended to teach what reverent Christian imagination has always held, that the Lord by sharing sanctified the condition of departed souls.

Rufinus also explains that the addition of the word *this*, in the clause *resurrection of this flesh*, teaches the identity of the future with the present body. This was the ordinary popular view, and has been endorsed by the authority of Bishop Pearson. But it is misleading if a materialistic meaning is attached to the words, and we may be thankful that the emphatic *this* has been dropped from our Creed.[1]

The Creed of Milan, at the end of the fourth century, only differed from the Roman by the substitution of *suffered* for *crucified*. It interests us as the Baptismal Creed of S. Augustine. And it is also worthy of note that he found no difficulty, when he went across to Africa, in accepting the slightly different form which he found in use there.

The Creed of Africa, which he quotes in one of his sermons,[2] has the words *creator of the Universe, King of the ages, immortal and invisible* in clause 1. And at the end the spiritual benefits of *the remission of sins, the resurrection of the flesh* and *eternal life* are represented as received *through the holy Church*. As early as A.D. 255 S. Cyprian quoted from his Interrogative Creed: 'Dost thou believe in eternal life and remission of sins through the holy Church?' Here it is obvious that the transposition of clause 10 has some relation to the rigorist view of African theology represented by S. Cyprian, who taught that baptism by heretics was invalid, that through the Church alone true Baptism can be administered. But as Archbishop Benson put it in a fine phrase, 'Life corrected the error of thought.' With the rejection of this

[1] See p. 102. [2] *Sermons*, p. 215.

narrow view of S. Cyprian the Church at large clung to the original order of the clauses in the third division of the Creed.

The characteristic differences in the Creed of Spain at this period, the end of the fourth century, are only known to us through a quotation in the writings of the heretic Priscillian, who 'confounded the Persons' of the Holy Trinity. Apart, however, from the heretical variations in his creed there is proof that it included the word *suffered* and the words *God* and *almighty* in the clause '*sitteth at the right hand of God the Father almighty.*'

Turning from Spain to Gaul we find that the creeds of Gallican writers from the beginning of the fifth century show an increasing approximation to the type of our Received Text. But these must be reserved for another chapter.

## CHAPTER III

### OUR APOSTLES' CREED

Our Apostles' Creed is plainly derived, like all other Western creeds, from the original Old Roman type. But there is great diversity of opinion on the questions how and when and where it first made its appearance. I am not taking into account at this point the minute differences which distinguish the form used in our Baptismal Service from the form used at Morning and Evening Prayer. I refer to the common type which they share, characterised by the additions *maker of heaven and earth, conceived, suffered, dead, He descended into hell, God* (the Father) *almighty, catholic, the communion of saints, and the life everlasting.*[1]

We have already met with some of these additions. Thus we have found *suffered* in the Creed of Milan. The Church of Milan had great influence in the development of liturgical forms in the West, and it was possibly through this channel that the phrase passed into the Creeds of Spain and Gaul. On the other hand the writings of Irenæus may have been the common source. We have found *descended into hell* in the creed of Aquileia, the words *God* and *almighty* added to *sitteth at the right hand of the Father* in Spain, *life* everlasting from an early date in the African Creed. We have yet to

[1] Also by the order Jesus Christ (for Christ Jesus), *thence* for *whence, I believe* for *And* (in the Holy Ghost).

discover at what period they were combined, and the remaining phrases added.

Perhaps the most interesting method of explaining the history of these clauses will be to quote the earliest creeds in which each of them is found, with a short description of the historical background in every case. We may then proceed to the more difficult question, which does not yet admit of a final answer. Where are we to look first for the finished product? Just as astronomers have calculated where they should look for a new planet, having detected its presence because they observed traces of its influence on other heavenly bodies whose motions, apparently irregular, were only thus to be accounted for; so the historian of the creeds can observe the influence of the new form of creed spreading in Gaul, Italy, and Germany from about A.D. 700, and proceeds to select from two or three possible centres of thought that which seems to be the most probable home of the creed. But when I speak in this way of 'possible centres' and a 'probable home' I do not wish to convey the impression that this department of theological study deals only with hypotheses, more or less rash, and has no real evidence to produce in support of its theories. On the contrary, we may confidently assert that every new form which has been discovered during the last ten years and traced to a definite locality, or the dwelling-place of some historical personage, helps us to proceed scientifically from the known to the unknown, and to narrow down still further the limits of problems that remain unsolved.

### Niceta of Remesiana.

The discovery of the attractive personality of Niceta, who was Bishop of Remesiana, in what is now known as Servia, is one of the most romantic of literary adven-

tures. Some years ago Dom. G. Morin, O.S.B., in a brilliant article in the *Benedictine Review* showed that various treatises published under the names of Nicetas of Aquileia and Nicetius of Trèves should be restored to him as their true author. He proved that the earlier Niceta was an energetic missionary among Roman colonists, and among the half-savage tribes of the district. He was also a man of considerable culture, a tried friend of the saintly Paulinus of Nola, who greatly admired his poetic gifts. Dom. Morin further suggested that the preservation in certain MSS. of Irish *provenance* of a tradition that the hymn *Te Deum laudamus* was written by a Nicetius (or in one MS. Neceta) pointed to Niceta as the probable author.[1] Without entering into detail, I may quote from his sermon on the Creed, which is the fifth book of his *Instructions for Neophytes*:

I. 1. I believe in God the Father almighty, *maker of heaven and earth*,

II. 2. And in His Son Jesus Christ (our Lord ?),

3. Born of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary,

4. *Suffered* under Pontius Pilate, crucified, *dead.*

5. The third day He rose again *alive* from the dead,

6. He ascended into heaven,

7. Sitteth at the right hand of the Father,

8. From *thence* He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

III. 9. And in the Holy Ghost,

10. the holy Church *catholic, the communion of saints*,

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[1] I have discussed these questions fully in my *Niccta of Remesiana* (Camb. Univ. Press, 1905), which is the first edition of his collected works.

11. the remission of sins,

12. the resurrection of the flesh, *and the life everlasting.*

Probably this creed-form was in use throughout the district, and the additions *maker of heaven and earth* and *suffered* are also found in a contemporary creed preserved in some Arian fragments which are vaguely designated as belonging to the Danube lands, that is to say, to Pannonia and Moesia, which were contiguous to Dacia. Probably these creeds of the Balkan peninsula derived the addition from the East, lying as they did on the border-line between the Eastern and Western Empires, and on the great highroad between Constantinople and Milan. For it was Milan more than Rome which was the capital of the West at this time. All Eastern creeds had some reference to the work of God in Creation. Thus the famous dated Creed of Sirmium, drawn up in 351 by Bishop Mark of Arethusa, begins thus:

'We believe in one Only and True God, the Father Almighty, Creator and Framer of all things.'

I quote this Creed of Sirmium chiefly for the sake of a subsequent passage.

'We know that He, the Only-begotten Son of God, at the Father's bidding came from the heavens for the abolishment of sin, and was born of the Virgin Mary, and conversed with the disciples, and fulfilled all the Economy according to the Father's will, was crucified and died and descended into those parts beneath the earth, and regulated the things there, whom the gatekeepers of hell saw (Job xxxviii. 17, lxx.) and shuddered; and He rose from the dead the third day.'

It does not matter for our present purpose whether this Creed was based on the Creed of the district Pannonia, or on the Syrian Creed which Mark brought with

him from Palestine. It shows how, quite apart from the special subject of controversy between the Arians and the Catholics, the ordinary catechetical teaching of the Church went on, and the *Descent into Hell* was taught, where men had begun to think about it, even before Rufinus quoted it from the Aquileian Creed.

We find mention of the Descent into Hell in the catechetical lectures of Cyril of Jerusalem, but it did not find a place in the Jerusalem Creed nor in that of Niceta, who quoted from Cyril.

A very interesting new form, which has quite recently been discovered by Dom. Morin, may with great probability be traced to the pen of S. Jerome. It is very probably the Faith which he mentions in one of his letters[1] as sent to Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem.

### The Faith of S. Jerome.

I believe in one God the Father almighty, maker of things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, born of God, God of God, Light of light, almighty of almighty, true God of true God, born before the ages, not made, by whom all things were made in heaven and in earth. Who for our salvation descended from heaven, was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered by suffering under Pontius Pilate, under Herod the king, crucified, buried, descended into hell, trod down the sting of death, rose again the third day, appeared to the apostles. After this He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father, thence shall come to judge the quick and the dead. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, God not unbegotten nor begotten, not created nor made, but coeternal with the Father and the Son. I believe (that there is) remission of sins in the holy catholic church, communion of saints, resurrection of the flesh unto eternal life. Amen.

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[1] *Ep.* 17, n. 4.

This is one of the most important of the discoveries which have been made in the last few years. It directly connects the creeds of West and East. We reflect that Jerome was born in Pannonia, that he had travelled through Asia Minor on his way to Palestine. He introduces phrases of the Jerusalem Creed into his Baptismal Creed much in the same way as Cyril had himself introduced phrases of the First Nicene Creed into the Jerusalem Creed. S. Jerome may have picked up the clause *communion of saints* in Cappadocia. Dom. Morin thinks that it comes down from the days when Firmilian upheld so strongly the doctrine that in the true Church alone could valid Baptism be administered or salvation be secured.[1] We will discuss this interpretation of the words later on.[2] Our present concern is purely historical. In these Creeds of Niceta and Jerome alone we have found all the phrases which are missing links with the ultimate Western Creed.

We must now turn to a series of Gallican creeds of the fifth century, which shows them coming into more general use.

Faustus, Bishop of Riez, sometime abbot of the important monastery of Lerins, a strong centre of spiritual as well as intellectual influence, quotes in acknowledged writings the following: 'I believe also in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary'; and '(I believe also) in the Holy Ghost, the holy church, communion of saints, remission of sins, resurrection of the flesh, life everlasting.'

There is a collection of sermons passing under the name of Eusebius Gallus which are generally attributed

[1] *Revue d'Histoire et de Littérature Religieuses*, ix., 1904, 22 ff.

[2] p. 94.

to Faustus, but their evidence does not carry us further except in the addition of the word *catholic*. And there is less need to rely on evidence that is in any way doubtful, because we can now say confidently that the Creed of Cæsarius, Bishop of Arles (503-543), combined all the additions which we have in mind except *maker of heaven and earth* and *God Almighty* in article 7. Cæsarius was a great popular preacher, a man who was also an eminent theologian. He presided over the Council of Orange which ended the semi-Pelagian controversy.

We may compare with the Creed of Cæsarius another, extracted from a letter of Cyprian, Bishop of Toulon, in which he refers respectfully to Cæsarius. But it is less complete in that it omits *dead* and *descended into hell*. Much the same evidence is offered by a creed of Eligius of Noyon (+659), which likewise omits these phrases, and in the third division, which is not quoted by Cyprian, omits also *communion of saints*.

Amid some diversity it is safe to say that the form in use in the south of France approximated to our Received Text though without the words *maker of heaven and earth*. Indeed it is the date when these words were inserted which is the crux of the whole question. But at the same time we are much nearer to the truth than Bishop Westcott was able to go when he wrote in his *Historic Faith* of the clause *communion of saints*, 'Our Western forefathers added, as late perhaps as the eighth century, a fresh clause to the Creed.'[1]

We have seen that the clause *communion of saints* was becoming common in the south of France, and that other additions characteristic of the final form were (so to speak) available from the fourth century. Moreover, if we may conjecture that the additions common to the Creeds of

[1] p. 123.

Jerome and Niceta belonged to Jerome's native Creed of Pannonia, we find them in use on the great highroad between East and West, along which, as Dr. Sanday says, there was 'a strong set of the current . . . from behind the Balkans through Aquileia to Milan. And from Milan it was an easy step to Lerinum.' [1]

This suggestion easily accounts for the introduction into the south of France, through the school of Lerins, of the majority of the additions which we have noted in the Creeds of Faustus and Cæsarius.

It is impossible to avoid a reference at this point to a difficult problem of Liturgiology, the question of the origin of the so-called Gallican Liturgy. Duchesne holds that the Gallican Liturgy, represented by the Ambrosian rite of Milan, Gallican service-books, and the Mozarabic or Spanish rite, is a Cappadocian Liturgy which was introduced into Milan by Auxentius, the Arian predecessor of Ambrose. He proves that the influence of the See of Milan was supreme in North Italy and in Gaul, and thus explains the triumph of the Gallican rite over the Roman.

On the other hand many writers, notably Dom. Cagin, maintain that the Gallican rite, however altered, is based on the oldest Roman Liturgy, that it takes us back to the days when the Church in Rome spoke Greek and possessed a Liturgy parallel in type to the oldest Eastern Liturgy. The original Greek Liturgy seems to have held its own until the middle of the fourth century, but for some time a Latin Liturgy had existed side by side with it. The Roman Canon seems to be the result of a compromise between the two.[2] The so-called Leonine, Gelasian, and Gregorian Sacramentaries re-

[1] Sanday, *Journal of Theological Studies*, iii. 14.

[2] W. H. Frere, *New History of the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 440.

present three stages in the history of the Roman Liturgy, from the sixth to the eighth century. This must be kept in mind when we deal with creed-forms in Sacramentaries which contain mixtures of Gallican and Roman rites.

Probably the latter theory is by far the most satisfactory, and it fits in with the fact that the Balkan peninsula with Pannonia had been colonised from Rome, and probably Christianised also, so that when the current of influence set westward in the fourth century it brought back again, as it were with interest, a loan of sacred knowledge which had been formerly sent from Rome.

The usual practice of historians in discussion of our Apostles' Creed is to start from Priminius, the celebrated Benedictine missionary, as the first historical character with whom we can connect the form. But before A.D. 700 there were other creed-forms in use in Gaul, which included the words *maker of heaven and earth*, though with other variations which distinguished them from the form which we seek. During the seventh century Roman missionaries were constantly traversing Gaul on their way to Britain. They were responsible for the frequent mixture of Gallican and Roman rites in the old service-books.

At the same time we must remember another kind of influence which was potent during the seventh century, the influence of Celtic missionaries, who streamed across the continent until they came into touch with the remnants of the old Latin Christianity of the Danube. This is a most important fact which has been entirely left out of account in dealing with this question. Yet I am inclined to see in it the missing link which has hitherto been lacking in the evidence.

'The old diocese of Chur was on the highroad from

the Upper Drave to the Rhine. S. Columban and his companion S. Gall were welcomed on the Lake of Constance by the Christian priest of Arbon. The pilgrimage of Fortunatus[1] is evidence of the life of the Church in Noricum and Rhaetia in 565. It is not likely that it had been wholly stamped out in the forty years before the arrival of S. Columban. The priest of Arbon was not the only priest in the district. His father would be a contemporary of Fortunatus. Bregenz was the western end of the great road by the Vorarlberg to Innsbruck, the Brenner, and the Upper Drave valley. It was in touch with the old Christian centres of Augsburg and Chur.

'S. Columban remained only a short time at Bregenz. . . . The call seemed to have come to him over the Brenner, to strengthen the Church along the highway of the East, on the confines of the ancient province of Illyricum. He left S. Gall on the Lake of Constance,[2] and himself settled at Bobbio.

'S. Columban worked in all for twenty-five years, more or less, in touch with the relics of the old Christianity of the Burgundian and Rhaetian peoples. His Celtic spirit of independence cut him off from the court clergy of Gaul and from the Catholicism of Rome. But his sympathetic nature, native to the Irish race, made him quick to appreciate the work and the traditions of the struggling Christianity which he met with on the Lake of Constance and in the valleys of the Alps. It is probable that this Celtic sympathy led him to enrich the formularies of his own Church from the rites and traditions of the Latin Church of the Danube still surviving in Burgundy and Rhaetia. Bobbio became the great Celtic centre of learning in North Italy, while the monasteries of S.

[1] From North Italy to Tours.

[2] To found the famous monastery of S. Gallen.

Gallen and of Reichenau became the Celtic schools north of the Alps. They with the mother-house Luxeuil became the nursery of the so-called Gallican tradition, a tradition which was probably as much Illyrican as it was Gallican or Celtic.'[1]

Now the chief documents which we have to discuss as containing forms almost identical with the Received Text until its final dated appearance in a treatise of the Abbot Priminius of Reichenau, are found in documents connected with one or other of these monasteries founded by Columban and his friends. In the case of sermons on the Creed it often happens that the form commented on, the form that is of the author, differs from the form inserted at the beginning, which shows very often signs of development. But amid the constant ebb and flow, so to speak, of the waves we can discern the constant rising of the tide.

In this connection it is very important to compare the sermons inserted in the so-called Gallican Sacramentary and Gallican Missal. The Gallican Sacramentary,[2] more properly called the Missal of Bobbio, is a seventh-century MS., containing the old Roman type of Liturgy which was brought by S. Columban to Bobbio. It is the type which had been sent from Rome to Britain in the fifth century, and preserved in the Celtic Church, though Columban added to it. It contains a sermon used at the Delivery of the Creed in a context which is plainly to be connected with Roman rites, because it follows the Opening of the Ears, or delivery of the first words of the four Gospels. The creed-form inserted at the beginning (A) represents the form used at Bobbio before 700, while the form commented on (E) represents the creed of the original author. Of these A is almost exactly the

[1] Rev. T. Barns, *Some Creed Problems.*

[2] This MS. is at Paris, Bibl. Nat. *Cod. lat.* 13246.

Received Text, but E still lacks *maker of heaven and earth* and *communion of saints.*

On the other hand, the Gallican Missal,[1] written *c.* A.D. 700, is a volume containing fragments of two Sacramentaries. The history of the first is unknown. It contains a sermon also delivered in connection with the ceremony of *Opening the Ears,* therefore presumably from a Roman source, which contains an interpolated creed with all the additions of the Received Text, while the creed of the author to be recovered from his commentary lacks *maker of heaven and earth, descended into hell,* and *communion of saints.*

The other Sacramentary comes to us from Auxerre, and the sermon on the Creed is connected with prayers from a Gallican source. The inserted creed is like our Received Text without the words *descended into hell.* The same sermon is found in other MSS., one of which is a collection of sermons, mainly by Cæsarius of Arles, which comes from Freising, and was written in the eighth century. As I have already pointed out that the forms at the beginning of such sermons may be taken to represent the creed-forms in the place when and where the MS. was copied, so we are able to compare two forms, the one copied in the diocese of Auxerre *c.* A.D. 700, and the other in the diocese of Freising seventy years later. It is not certain that these particular copyists interpolated the creed-forms familiar to them, but their tendency would be to assimilate any form to the forms used in their day.

Both forms are substantially like our Received Text, but whereas the Auxerre form omits *descended into hell,* and adds (after 'ascended') *as victor* (into heaven), a variation which is found both in Gaul and North Italy, it appears to be less in the direct line of approach to the

[1] Now at the Vatican, *Cod. Vat. Palat. lat.*, 493.

Received Text than the other. The creed from Freising brings us back again to the Creed of Priminius. He was probably an Irish monk who came through Neustria into Germany, where he founded the Abbey of Reichenau, and other monasteries in Bavaria and Alsace. Now Priminius was a friend of the great missionary Boniface, who visited him at Hornbach before starting on his last journey, and it was Boniface who founded the Bishopric of Freising. We can trace the use of the Received Text along the line of the journeys both of Boniface and Priminius, and there is no doubt that they extended its use. When we ask how they received it, there can be little doubt that they received it from the Roman Church, with which Boniface was in constant communication. Pope Gregory II. sent him instructions to use what seems to have been an official Roman Order of Baptism, which would doubtless include a Roman form of Creed. Pirminius, who was far from being an original writer, made great use of a treatise written by Martin of Bracara in the sixth century, but in the section dealing with the Creed substitutes a Roman form of Renunciation, and a reference to the Roman rite of Unction which followed Baptism, which leads us to suppose that the form of Creed substituted for Martin's form was also Roman.

In the present defective state of our information I cannot prove that the Received Text was a Roman Revision,[1] but I think that it is becoming clear that it was disseminated from Rome after A.D. 700. It was comparatively of little importance to prove whence it was brought to Rome, whether from Gaul or Bobbio.[2] Our information

[1] My suggestion to this effect in my *Introduction* was only tentative, though I think that it explains all the facts.

[2] The Psalter of Gregory in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, *Cod.* N. 468, is probably a copy of a Psalter sent by Pope Gregory III., A.D. 731-741, that is, in the time of Priminius.

concerning the Roman Creed of the sixth and seventh centuries is very meagre. While Pelagius I. uses the old form, Gregory the Great in a private confession of faith brings in the word *conceived*, which shows a leaning to an enlargement of the familiar phrases. Harnack supposes that the use of the Constantinopolitan Creed (=our Nicene Creed) in the Gelasian Sacramentary proves that the Roman Church had substituted the Nicene Creed for the older baptismal Creed. Caspari thought that this was done to meet the pressure of Gothic Arianism under Odoacer, *c.* 476-493. The fact remains, however, that Pelagius and Gregory I. quote the older form, and that the missionaries to Britain whom Gregory sent, and their successors, brought the Roman form and not the Nicene.

Another explanation of the use of the Nicene Creed is, that during the time of Byzantine influence the Baptismal Creed of Constantinople was offered to Greek-speaking catechumens, as the equivalent of the Roman Creed, the Greek text of which had long before been forgotten. A Baptismal Order from Vienne, which is derived from the same source as the Gelasian Sacramentary, directs that the God-parents should be asked: 'Is Greek understood?' The answer 'No' follows, and then 'I believe in God,' not 'in one God,' that is the Roman Creed. Time passed, and there were no more Greek-speaking catechumens. It became necessary to explain the existence of two parallel forms, and in some Orders of Baptism we find the absurd explanation that one was used for girls and the other for boys.

It is to be hoped that further evidence will soon be found which will throw light on the use of both forms in Rome in the seventh century. A collection, apparently made in the ninth century, has lately been found by Dom.

Morin.[1] It contains the Roman Order of Baptism in which the Received Text occurs, but there is also a sermon expounding the older Roman form, and there is a reference to the custom of reciting the Nicene Creed over catechumens when they recited their creed on Thursday in Holy Week. In this case it was not really used as a Baptismal Creed proper, but, together with Greek lessons and Greek hymns, to emphasise the idea of the unity of the Church, which among different nations and in different languages worships one God. We may say with some confidence that the use of the older Roman form never ceased till it was superseded by the Revised Text, not regarded as a new form, but only as improved.

At the end of the eighth century Charles the Great issued a series of questions to the Bishops of his Empire, of whom he inquired as to the forms of Creed in current use. Some of the replies have been preserved, and among them one from Amalarius of Trèves is very important, because it shows that he not only used the Received Text, but also definitely states that he used the Roman Order of Baptism.

Twenty-four years later the acts of a provincial synod at Mainz, summoned by the Emperor, have preserved the statement of his wish for uniformity according to the Roman Order, and direct that those who cannot learn the Creed in Latin may learn it in their own tongue. From that date we can trace Old German translations.

It seems clear, then, that the form which we now use, whether moulded into its present shape in Luxeuil, or Bobbio, or in Rome itself, had been adopted in Rome before A.D. 700, and was sent out through Boniface and other Benedictine missionaries, as afterwards under the directions of Charles the Great, all over the West.

[1] In *Cod. Sessorianus*, 52 saec. xi. xii.

# PART II. THE TEACHING

## CHAPTER IV

### THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

*I believe.*

It has been pointed out (p. 4) that the use of the singular pronoun is not a characteristic of Western Creeds as distinguished from Eastern, but of all Baptismal Creeds. Indeed from New Testament times the solemn act of confession of faith has been regarded as distinctively a personal act. And the emphasis which has been laid in Christian circles of thought on the teaching of personal responsibility has contributed in no small degree to the development of the conception of Personality, both Human and Divine. We are coming to see, as Mr. Illingworth puts it, that 'Personality is the gateway of all knowledge.' We should be grateful to Christian philosophers for the profound influence which they have exercised in this direction. And in this respect there is no need to turn to elaborate systems of abstract thought expressed in technical terms beyond the mental grasp of ordinary people. There is a philosophy of common-sense which is expressed in the ordinary growth of human language, and in the ordinary progress of a child's mind from the dawn of self-consciousness.

A certain German philosopher used to teach each of

his children to keep the anniversary not of birth, but of the day when the child first said 'I.' It is the same profound conception which inspires many Christians with the desire to keep the anniversary of their confirmation as the day on which they publicly accepted the privileges of their position as 'members of Christ,' and pledged themselves to be 'Christ's soldiers.'

Without any special philosophical training it is within the power of an ordinary educated person to read the history of Christian thought so carefully summarised by Mr. Illingworth in his Bampton Lectures on 'Personality, Human and Divine.'[1] It was under the influence of Christian ideas that men attained to the fuller self-consciousness which is the highest prerogative of the human race to-day. In some directions Greek thinkers had reached the limits of analysis. But in the Christian character, reproduced in thousands of disciples of Christ, living under every variety of circumstances and conditions, a new type of personality appeared in the world and sought to explain itself. The full importance of this new development is not seen till we reach the fourth century. At the end of that epoch of the history of the world which witnessed the decline of the Roman Empire, S. Augustine prepared the way for a new advance of thought by his profound meditations on the mystery of his own being. The *Confessions* of S. Augustine was an epoch-making book, for it turned men's minds from metaphysics to psychology, from speculation about final causes in the world around us to observation of the great conflict between flesh and spirit which is going on within us, and to reflection on the powers of thought, feeling, and will which are the distinctive faculties of each human being. And of these faculties 'to will' is the greatest, because it is the nearest approach to a final cause of

[1] Published by Macmillan, cheap edition, 6d.

which we have any knowledge. To say 'I think therefore I am' with one philosopher does not raise a man above the level of a calculating machine, unless he is conscious that he desires to have noble thoughts and wills so to desire. On the other hand, to say 'I feel therefore I am' would open the way for the philosophy of pleasure-seeking, which in every age is 'Procuress to the lords of hell.'

Corresponding to this complex being of man is the complex character of faith, which is man's noblest activity. 'Faith,' in the words of Bishop Westcott, 'is thought illuminated by emotion and concentrated by will.' It is pre-eminently a personal act, in which reason, feeling, and purpose are elements. Faith which is unreasoning is degraded into superstition. Faith which is unfeeling is the aspiration of a fanatic whose creed cannot stir loving hearts. Faith without willing is the assent of a condemned criminal to the sentence of doom, the assent which our intellect is forced to yield to the laws of the natural world. We are in no sense better men or women because we believe that fire burns, unless the inquisitor who uses fire as torture is better because better informed than we.

Because faith, then, in its highest sense is the act of the whole man able to feel, think, and will, faith must influence conduct. This is no unmeaning conceit of Christian thought when we say that creed influences conduct. Emerson writes, 'A man's conduct is the picture-book of his creed.' This is equally true whether his creed be that of a believer or a sceptic.

*I believe in God.*

The use of the preposition *in* is important. There is a difference between our saying 'I believe God,' that there is a God, that what God has revealed of His will

and purpose is true, and our saying 'I believe in God,' I put my whole trust in Him, I am ready to fear and love Him with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind, and with all my strength. It was Rufinus who first emphatically called attention to the meaning of the preposition and to the fulness of the trustfulness which it implies. He points out how it is repeated for each of the Divine Persons. I believe in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, giving to each the glory due unto His Name with thankfulness for His share in the work of my Redemption. Then I go on to say, understanding the repetition of 'I believe,' 'the holy Catholic Church,' not '*in* the holy Catholic Church,' that there is a holy Church. As Rufinus puts it: 'It is not said, "*In* the holy Church," nor "*In* the forgiveness of sins," nor "*In* the resurrection of the flesh." For if the preposition *in* had been added, it would have had the same force as in the preceding articles. But now in those clauses in which the faith concerning the Godhead is declared, we say "*In* God the Father," and "*In* Jesus Christ His Son," and "*In* the Holy Ghost," but in the rest, where we speak not of the Godhead but of creatures and mysteries, the preposition *in* is not added. We do not say "We believe *in* the holy Church," but "We believe the holy Church," not as God, but as the Church gathered together to God: and we believe that there is "forgiveness of sins"; we do not say "We believe *in* the forgiveness of sins"; and we believe that there will be a "resurrection of the flesh"; we do not say "We believe *in* the resurrection of the flesh." By this monosyllabic preposition, therefore, the Creator is distinguished from the creatures, and things divine are separated from things human.'[1]

[1] *Commentary*, c. 36. In some Latin creeds we find the names of the Divine Persons put in the Ablative case to mark this

*He that cometh to God must believe that He is.* The arguments for the existence of God meet with varying degrees of acceptance. It has been well said that they are 'sufficient not resistless, convincing not compelling.'

There is the cosmological argument, or in other words the argument for a First Cause. How did this world come into being? We do not like savages attribute natural phenomena to the immediate action of personal beings like ourselves, spirits of the air and the woods and the deep. But the widest observation of the working of natural laws leads to the belief that 'we recognise in the universe without us certain qualities of infinitude, reality, causation, independence, and the like, which have no counterpart except in the region of our own personality, and can only, therefore, be interpreted as attributes of a person.'

There is the argument from design which, though modified by recent scientific discoveries, has been rather strengthened than weakened. The higher up we go in the scale of being the more wonderful is the evidence of design. Things are, so to speak, prepared for one another. It has been well said of the eye: 'A microscope invented in a city of the blind could hardly surprise us more. It is a correct vaticination of the laws of refraction in a realm that has never even heard of light.'

There is the ontological argument, or suggestion that the existence of God is proved by our thought of Him, which was the chief contribution of Anselm to the thought of the Middle Ages. As Illingworth points

distinction. But it is not safe to take too much notice of cases in early MSS., because in the early Middle Ages copyists were very vague as to the difference between the Accusative and the Ablative.

out, this line of thought underlay Plato's theory of Ideas, and the teaching of Augustine.[1]

Above all is the argument from conscience, or the moral argument. We are conscious of freedom and we are conscious of a sense of duty. And this sense of moral obligation is felt just as strongly by those races which we are accustomed to call uncivilised. Mr. Illingworth illustrates this from the world-wide institution of Taboo, as including the twofold notion of religious reverence and religious abhorrence. Thus universally 'man is conscious of an imperative obligation upon his conduct. It is not a physical necessity, disguised in any shape or form, for he is also conscious of being free either to accept or to decline it. It cannot originate within him, for he has no power to unmake it; and it accomplishes purposes which its agent does not at the time foresee—results to himself and others which he can recognise afterwards as rational, but which his own individual reason could never have designed. It cannot be the voice of other men, though human law may give it partial utterance; for it speaks to his motives, which no law can fathom, and calls him to attainments which no law can reach. Yet, with all its independence of human authorship, it has the notes of personality about it. It commands our will with an authority which we can only attribute to a conscious will. It constrains us to modes of action which are not of our own seeking, yet which issue in results that only reason could have planned. It educates our character with a nicety of influence irresistibly suggestive of paternal care. The philosophers who have probed it, the saints and heroes who have obeyed and loved it, the sinners who have defied it, are agreed in this. And the inevitable inference must be that it is the voice of a Personal God.'[2]

[1] *Personality*, p. 53. [2] *Ib.*, p. 56.

When we come to the study of the idea of God in the Old Testament as compared with that of other religions we find that the difference is one of kind rather than degree. S. Athanasius rightly claimed that the Law and the Prophets were for all the world 'a sacred school of the knowledge of God and the ordering of the soul.'[1] Step by step the Jews were led to the conviction of the unity of God, which was the last word of heathen philosophy, but it was never in their minds a mere metaphysical doctrine, it was always associated with belief in God's holiness, so that morality kept pace with religion. 'Hence the Jew was not called upon as the Greek to choose between his religion and his conscience.'[2]

The Christian religion claimed to be the fulfilment of the hope of Israel. Christ is not only a prophet but more than a prophet, the only Revealer of the Father: *No man knoweth the Father but the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal him.* And the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is not, as is so often supposed, a mistaken and, to say the least, superfluous addition to the doctrine of Jewish Monotheism, but the logical analysis of the words of Christ, all the authority of which is based on the Christian conception of the perfectness of His character. *Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ,* above all in the fact that under the stimulus of His personal influence men really lived a new life, and brought into the world a new type of character, which under all possible varieties of time and place is consciously moulded after His likeness. And the grace and beauty of the Christian character commend to the world the truth of His teaching about God as His Father and our Father, and about the Holy Spirit as our Guide.

[1] *De Incarn.*, c. 112.

[2] Aubrey Moore, *Lux Mundi*, ed. 15, p. 54.

*Almighty.*

The original Greek word means rather 'all-sovereign' than 'all-powerful.' The common explanation 'able to do anything' is quite inadequate. Ancient expositions of the Creed often enlarge on the point that God cannot die, cannot deceive. In Him is Life, and Truth is the very law of His Being. And He rules in the world of His creation in order that He may carry out the beneficent purposes which in far-seeing love He plans for men despite the interruption which, through misuse of their freewill, they interpose. He has not set the world to go like a watch that has been wound up, which needs no further attention so long as the mainspring retains power of movement. The doctrine of God which was popular in the eighteenth century, not only among Deists but also among orthodox divines, erred by laying too much stress on the idea of Divine transcendence, the majesty of the Creator, ineffably exalted above His work in such a sense as to be removed from contact with, or care for, His creatures. A great reaction was inevitable. 'The one absolutely impossible conception of God, in the present day, is that which represents Him as an occasional Visitor. Science had pushed the deist's God farther and farther away, and at the moment when it seemed as if He would be thrust out altogether, Darwinism appeared, and, under the guise of a foe, did the work of a friend. It has conferred upon philosophy and religion an inestimable benefit, by showing us that we must choose between two alternatives. Either God is everywhere present in nature, or He is nowhere. He cannot be here and not there.'[1] We must frankly accept the truth of Divine immanence so clearly expressed in our Lord's teaching about His Father's interest in and

[1] Aubrey Moore, *art. cit.*, p. 73.

care for flowers and birds. This truth was held in common by representative teachers both of East and West. S. Athanasius writes: 'The Word of God is not contained by anything, but Himself contains all things. . . . He was in everything and was outside all beings, and was at rest in the Father alone.'[1] S. Augustine writes: 'The same God is wholly everywhere, contained by no space, bound by no bonds, divisible into no parts, mutable in no part of His being, filling heaven and earth by the presence of His power. Though nothing can exist without Him, yet nothing is what He is.'[2]

This teaching about Divine Immanence does not contradict the equally important truth of Divine transcendence. In ourselves, in the relations of our human spirits to the material world around us, we are conscious of the same dual capacity. In our faculty of self-consciousness the spirit transcends the body, and still more in the sphere of morals the spirit, being conscious of freedom of choice, can become the master of lower desires. Also in every opportunity of scientific discovery and artistic creation is the spirit of man seen to transcend matter. But spirit is also immanent in matter, working through the brain and nervous system, 'so that we recognise a man's character in the expression of his eye, the tone of his voice, the touch of his hand; his unconscious and distinctive postures and gestures and gait.'[3] Moreover, spirit is immanent also in man's works, so that 'when we look at the pictures of Raffaelle, or listen to the music of Beethoven, or read the poetry of Dante, or the philosophy of Plato, the spirit of the great masters is affecting us really as if we saw them face to face: it is immanent in the painted canvas and the printed page.'[4]

Building upon these conceptions we are entitled to

[1] *De Incarn.*, c. 17. [2] *De Civ. Dei*, vii. c. xxx.
[3] Illingworth's *Divine Immanence*, p. 67. [4] *Ib.*, p. 68.

urge that the Trinitarian Conception of God harmonises with the analogy of our personal experience. 'For according to this doctrine, the Second Person of the Trinity is the essential, adequate, eternal manifestation of the First, "the express image of His person," "in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily," while "by Him all things were made." Here, then, we have our two degrees of immanence; the complete immanence of the Father in the Son, of which our own relation to our body is an inadequate type; and, as a result of this, His immanence in creation, analogous to our presence in our works; with the obvious difference, of course, that we finite beings who die and pass away, can only be impersonally present in our works; whereas He must be conceived as ever present to sustain and animate the universe, which thus becomes a living manifestation of Himself; no mere machine, or book, or picture, but a perpetually sounding voice.'[1]

### *Maker of heaven and earth.*

In the original creed the word *almighty* took for granted the thought that God was the creator of the world. Neither Jewish nor Gentile convert could doubt it. But when Marcion and other Gnostic heretics attempted to capture Christianity in the interest of a philosophy which distinguished the Good God of the highest heaven from the Demiurge, or Creator of this world with its pain, and misery, and imperfection, it became necessary in the judgment of many Churches to add these words.

The Gnostics felt quite as keenly as Pessimists of modern times the difficulty of believing that a God of love was responsible for the world as it is. They went

[1] Illingworth's *Divine Immanence*, p. 73.

on to ask, How could the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and love, have inspired the Old Testament in which the Jews were ordered to exterminate their enemies? Marcion's solution of the problem was that Christ and Christianity had nothing to do with any part of the Old Testament, and little to do with the New. He founded on the Pauline Epistles and a revised Gospel of Luke a theory of a Saviour who came suddenly into the world, unheralded and unwelcome, to reveal the unknown God of love. One great difficulty in dealing with Marcion was the fact that he knew and used the Old Roman Creed, interpreting the word *Father* of His Good God. It became necessary to insert teaching as Tertullian does, such as 'Founder of the world'[1] or 'Creator of the universe.'[2] In the later African Creeds this was enlarged into 'Creator of the universe, King of the ages, immortal and invisible.'[3] Since opposition to the Marcionites continued steadily till the fourth century it is easy to understand why we find the words in slightly varying forms in the Creeds of Cæsarea, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Aquileia. We can restore it in the Creed of Niceta of Remesiana, and we have noted it in the creed which S. Jerome seems to have brought from his home in Pannonia. The uncertainty which attaches to the historical formation of our Apostles' Creed as a finished product in no way affects the spirit of our interpretation of these words. We can read into them all the fervour with which the poet Wordsworth writes in his *Lines on Tintern Abbey*:

> 'I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime

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[1] *De uirg uel.*, c. 1. [2] *De praescr.*, c. 13.
[3] Aug. *Serm.*, p. 215; cf. Fulgentius, *c. Fab. Ar. Frag.* xxxvi.

Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear—both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.'

# CHAPTER V

## THE INCARNATION

The doctrine of the Incarnation is too often written of and spoken of as if it only included the doctrine of the Holy Nativity. This is a great mistake. It should never be discussed without some reference, implicit if not expressed, to all the history of the preparation of the world for Christ.[1] A catechism of the modern Greek Church sums it up in a sentence: 'Jesus Christ came into the world after many ages of preparation. The Jews were prepared by God for the coming of Jesus Christ through the patriarchs, Moses, and the prophets . . . but the Gentiles were prepared through men of great reasoning power and wisdom—to wit, Socrates, Plato, and others,—who perceived the wrongness of worshipping many gods, and whose minds were lifted up to the idea of one God.'[2]

Across every page of this history of the development of human thought is stamped the brand of our captivity to the law of sin and death. Man has sinned, and where human thought has been most free, carving out forms of imperishable beauty, as in the literature of ancient

[1] Reference may be made to such books as Edersheim's *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* and Westcott's *The Gospel of Life.*

[2] Published by authority of the Synod of the Holy Orthodox Church in Athens.

Greece, side by side with the utterance of noble thoughts stand the records of profligacy most shameless, and selfishness that always works its own ruin and degradation. The satirists of the Roman Empire felt this acutely and did not shrink from saying it.

Among one nation, and one only, was there hope of a golden age in the future, and a continual sense of man's need of penitence, which alone can prepare him to reap the full benefit of the redemption which he cannot compass for himself. The Jews, especially through their psalmists and prophets of a sacred literature, which has supplied the language of devotion for every age of the Christian era, looked for a deliverer, because they felt the galling weight of sin's chain, and the sting of its scourge.

But these reflections on the universal sense of sinfulness, and the unworthiness which attaches even to our holiest desires, bring us back to a thought which lies behind all such surveys of the history of religions. Was sin inevitable? What if man had not sinned? It is here, with the record of Creation, that we must found our doctrine of the Incarnation. Many great thinkers, of whom in our own generation Bishop Westcott was the greatest, have taught that the Incarnation would have taken place even if men had not sinned.

That deeply thoughtful, self-taught geologist, Hugh Miller, in *My Schools and Schoolmasters*, writes:[1] 'In the first dawn of being, simple vitality was united to matter: the vitality thus united became in each succeeding period of a higher and yet higher order; it was in succession the vitality of the mollusc, of the fish, of the reptile, of the sagacious mammal, and, finally, of responsible, immortal man, created in the image of God. What is to be the next advance? . . . it is to be the dynasty—

[1] p. 382.

the *kingdom*—not of glorified man, made in the image of God, but of God Himself in the form of man.'

But many trained theologians have felt on their own ground that such a conception was needed to fulfil the primal promise: 'Let us make man in our image after our likeness' (Gen. i. 26). They have found this Gospel of Creation hinted at in various passages of the New Testament: in S. John's Gospel (i. 4), 'In Him (the Word) was life,' considered in relation to S. Paul's view of the work of 'the Son of God's love' in the creation, preservation, redemption, consummation of finite being (Col. i. 13-20). They have felt that, if men had not sinned, they would still have needed a leader, a representative Son of Man, who should sustain and strengthen their relation of fellowship with God. The Incarnation would have been freed from all the circumstances of humiliation and suffering which were the consequences of sin.

This theory is sometimes put aside with scant ceremony as the Scotist theory, so named because the famous schoolman Duns Scotus held it. But it is far more ancient than the fourteenth century. A thousand years before it illuminated the thought of S. Hilary of Poitiers. It lay at the root of the phrase of the Nicene Creed, 'who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven,' for our redemption because we need it, but for more than that, for our restoration to that plane of progress along which we might have travelled so much further, along which by Divine grace, through infinite mercy, we are destined to travel still. In the words of S. Irenæus,[1] in the Divine order men are 'first made men, and then afterwards gods.'

The Apostles' Creed, it is true, does not, except in its Nicene form, open the door to such inquiries. It states

[1] *Adv. haer.* iv. 38, 4.

facts which explain the differentiation of Christian from Jewish belief, and the subsequent development of Christian doctrine. It sums up the witness of Christians of the second generation to the outline of the life of Christ on which all their teaching was based. They confessed that He was wonderfully born, that He suffered, died, rose, ascended into heaven. Thus we see the central truth of S. Paul's teaching, formulated in the first words of his Epistle to the Romans: 'Declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead,' incorporated in the Old Roman Creed of the next generation. But the theology of the early Church was as yet unformed. Only line upon line was the analysis of their experience worked out as the years passed, and new and vigorous minds took up the problem. How could the Lord Jesus be both God and man? They brought to the study of it intellects disciplined by the philosophical schools of ancient Greece and Rome. No one who has accepted the thought of the preparation of the Gentiles for Christ will shrink from the idea of the influence of Greek thought on Christian theology. He will see, dimly it is true, but thankfully, that it was provided for in the Divine education of the world. He will not be mystified by such paradoxical statements as this: 'An ethical sermon stood in the forefront of the teaching of Jesus Christ, and a metaphysical creed in the forefront of the Christianity of the fourth century.' 'Plain preaching must always precede higher religious education.' 'A theological creed is no more an end in itself than the analysis of good drinking-water. It supports our conviction that if we drink of the stream when it reaches us we shall find it not less pure than at the fountain-head. By itself it leaves us thirsty.'[1]

The statement of the Apostles' Creed: 'His (*i.e.* God's)

[1] *Introd. to the Creeds*, p. 6.

only Son,' is less technical, but does not really say less than the Nicene Creed with its metaphysical term 'of one substance with the Father.' On this everything turns. The plain fact is that He was worshipped as 'our Lord.' If He is not Divine, it is idolatry to worship Him. And it is simply incredible that all the building of the Christian Church through the ages should have been based on sand. But at this point we must take up the actual words of our Creed for detailed examination.

*And in Christ Jesus,* R—(*Jesus Christ,* T)—
*His only Son, our Lord.*

In some early Gallican Creeds the *Credo,* 'I believe,' was repeated at the beginning of this section to mark the importance of these words. Our faith is in Persons, not in systems of doctrine.

Jesus, the New Testament, *i.e.* Greek, form of the name Joshua, means *Saviour.* It was the name given to Him at His Circumcision, by which He was known all the days of His flesh, which was placarded on the Cross: 'Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.' Christ means *anointed.* It is the Greek translation of the Hebrew 'Messiah.' It was the title given to Him by the angels on Chrismas Eve (S. Luke ii. 11). Though the Samaritans had before confessed Him to be the Christ (S. John iv. 42), it was only in the confession of S. Peter (S. Matt. xvi. 16), after a course of careful training, that the title acquired its fullest significance: 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

It is in accord with the spirit of natural reverence that the name Jesus should not be used without the title Christ, or Lord. There is a tendency which sometimes leads to harmful results when men ask such a question as 'What would Jesus do?' It is scarcely reverent to

imagine Him as living under other circumstances than those which are recorded in the Gospels, first as an artisan, then as a prophet. We cannot, for example, imagine Him as a politician, or a soldier, or a journalist, or engaged in a great commercial enterprise?[1] The use of a title puts us at once on the right track. He is exalted to be a Prince and Saviour. He knows, with the sympathy which only comes of contact with the actual trials and miseries and temptations of the world, what the difficulties and dangers of ordinary human life are. And the question should run—'What would the Lord Jesus have me do, brought as I am into contact with Him by His Spirit?' Do we think enough of those strong words of S. Paul: 'No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but in the Spirit'? (1 Cor. xii. 3).

*Who was born by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary.*—R.

*Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,*
*born of the Virgin Mary.*—T.

The Miraculous Birth of our Lord has been made the subject of most unhappy controversy, especially in little books and in magazines, that is to say, under circumstances which make it impossible to state and weigh the evidence fully. Neither in this little book is it possible. But, at least, I can point my readers to other books in which from different points of view it is dealt with satisfactorily.

It has been well said that 'The evidence can never be less than it is, and may at any moment be extended.' This does not mean that the evidence is in itself fragmentary, like an ingenious restoration of a mutilated inscription. There were only two sources from which

[1] Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, p. 308.

the story could come into the stream of Christian tradition, from S. Joseph and from the Blessed Virgin. That we have two accounts from both points of view in the Gospels of S. Matthew and S. Luke is a reason for thankfulness not for discontent, even though under present circumstances there is great uncertainty about the earliest history of S. Matthew's Gospel, and a corresponding hesitation about quoting it, which is often absurd. If we could recover the writings of Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in the second century, from an Egyptian rubbish heap, this hesitation would probably vanish. As things are, S. Luke's record has to bear the brunt of the attack. During the last ten years S. Luke's accuracy as an historian has been triumphantly vindicated by Professor Ramsay. That he was an accurate observer is proved by his account of S. Paul's shipwreck, in which his account of winds and tides shows a trained faculty of observation. That he was a doctor has been inferred from his constant use of medical terms, and his manifest interest in different cures of disease. It would be difficult to imagine any one more competent to write the narrative. As a matter of fact he has not attempted to do so in his own words. The style of the opening chapters is not his own. With intense sympathy and consummate art he has woven into his Gospel what is evidently the narrative of the Blessed Virgin herself, communicated through some intimate friend 'who knew her heart, and could give him what was almost as good as first-hand information.'[1] All through the account of the early days of John the Baptist and the Child Jesus there are little touches which delicately indicate the authority on which he depended. There is an added touch of warmth when, having spoken of John as 'waxing strong,' it is said of Jesus that He 'waxed strong, filled

[1] Ramsay, *Was Christ born in Bethlehem?* p. 88.

with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him' (Luke ii. 40).

From this point of view no difficulty need be felt about the acknowledged silence of S. Mark, or the presumed silence of S. Paul and S. John. S. Mark, writing for beginners, began with the Lord's ministry. Of course, he may not have known of the story. The impression made by the Resurrection was quite enough to persuade men of the Lord's Divinity without questioning as to the mode of His acceptance of the conditions of human life. The same argument applies to S. Paul's epistles, which after all are only a portion of his correspondence, and in no sense a detailed account of his beliefs. Whether his teaching, indeed, on the second Adam can be properly explained without an implicit reference to the Miraculous Birth is a doubtful question. And in Gal. iv. 4: 'God sent forth His Son, made of a woman,' he only mentions the mother when, for the purpose of his argument, it would be more to the point to mention a Jewish father. This seems to imply that he did not think of Joseph as His Father.[1] At the beginning also of S. John's Gospel (i. 13) there occurs a disputed reading, which many critics of repute are prepared to accept as the best. For 'which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God,' early and good authorities have, 'Who was born . . .,' a remarkable reference if its claim be accepted to the Miraculous Birth.

I do not wish to labour these points. They should at least make us careful about pressing the argument from silence, which is so often a broken reed.

As for the attempts which are industriously made and published in little books to trace the genesis of the story either to heathen mythology or to Buddhism, I would point out that these are irreconcilable points of view.

[1] Zahn, *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 139.

If the story can be traced to the imagination of first-century Christians, it cannot be the result of Buddhist influence in the second century. All such explanations tend to bring into relief 'the craving of the human consciousness for the intervention of the supernatural.' They also show the contrast between the coarseness or grotesque character of fabled incarnations and the delicate reserve of the Gospels. As the Dean of Westminster says: 'The whole atmosphere of the Judaism of the time appears to me to be unfavourable to the transplantation of heathen myths. And if there is one characteristic of the first Christian teaching, it is the proclamation of *truth*. The shadows of superstition are scattered: figments are thrust aside on every hand: "children of light," "children of day," these are the epithets of new converts. Where are we to find the dark corners in which these new superstitions grew? And even if they did grow in some obscure place, was S. Luke the writer who was likely to be imposed upon by them?'[1]

*Crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried.*—R.
*Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified dead and buried.*—T.

The name of Pontius Pilate was brought into the old Roman Creed to give it an historical setting. That the Roman Christians were in the habit of referring to him when they spoke of the Crucifixion is proved by the well-known passage of Tacitus the historian. Before long rumours began to grow of Acts and Reports of Pilate which were supposed to exist in the Roman archives.

There was no desire to hold up the name to reproach. As the Lord Himself said of Pilate, his was not the

[1] J. A. Robinson, *Thoughts on the Incarnation*, p. 42.

greater sin. And the Apostles acknowledged that Pilate was determined to let Him go. True to the spirit of their risen Master, they forgave. As Mr. Latham says of the utterances of the risen Lord: 'There is an ineffable grandeur—so unconscious that we may fail to mark it—in the utter oblivion that is passed on the foes who had beset the path of the Son of Man. He no more resents the ills that men had wrought Him on His way through life than the traveller who has reached his home resents the insect plague of the desert or the tempests he has met with at sea.'[1]

S. Paul in his catechetical teaching seems to have gloried in the opportunity which the trial before Pilate gave to the Lord of witnessing the beautiful confession. This was the crowning act of His life, sealed in His blood. We sometimes hear a complaint that the Creed does not mention the Lord's teaching or miracles. On this point Dr. Zahn's words are convincing: 'The picture of Jesus going in and out amongst His people as teacher and benefactor has been found wanting. Must a confession that is used at Baptisms and Confirmations relate Bible history? This history does not admit of a compendious abridgment in a few words. Its charm and its winning credibility are found in its epic breadth. Surely a "character sketch" of Jesus does not belong to a formula of confession. Who could draw it so that all would believe in it? . . . Jesus Himself has made known His character for us as far as was necessary, above all in "the good confession," which He witnessed, suffering "before Pontius Pilate," and through the sacrifice of His life on the Cross, to which His whole life of service pointed from the very beginning. The Cross is the best compendium of the Gospel history. S. Paul as a mission preacher at times con-

[1] Latham, *Pastor Pastorum*, p. 450.

fined himself exclusively to this compendium of the Gospel (1 Cor. ii. 2).'[1]

The word *suffered*, which was substituted for *crucified* in the revised Roman Creed, appears regularly in Eastern creeds from early times. The idea is included in *crucified*, but the rise of Docetic heresy, which denied the truth of Christ's sufferings, rendered it necessary to assert it more explicitly. For the same reason the word *dead* was added to confute a heresy which some sentimental people desire to revive to-day. He truly died, of His own will, subjecting His human nature to such a strain that the thread of life, as it were, snapped and, literally as well as metaphorically, He died of a broken heart. Thus was the sacrifice of the contrite heart, penitent for our sakes, penitent in regard of our sins, perfected in the propitiation offered for the sins of the whole world.

The word *buried* was used from the first to throw into relief the triumphant confession of the Resurrection.

### *He descended into hell.*—I.

This addition to the Creed first makes its appearance in creed-forms at the end of the fourth century, the conciliar creeds Sirmium (Ariminum), Nice, and Constantinople, the private Creed of Jerome, and the Baptismal Creed of Aquileia. But the idea had been presented in Christian tradition from the earliest times.

Ignatius writes to the Magnesians: 'Even the prophets, being His disciples, were expecting Him as their teacher through the Spirit. And for this cause He whom they rightly awaited, when He came, raised them from the dead.'[2]

Irenæus quotes a certain presbyter 'who had heard it

[1] Zahn, *Apostles' Creed*, p. 214. [2] *Ad Mag.*, c. 9.

from those who had seen the apostles, and from those who had been their disciples,' as having said that the Lord 'descended into the region beneath the earth, preaching His advent there also, and declaring remission of sins received by those who believe in Him.'[1]

We are not bound to accept this somewhat materialistic idea of a locality inside the earth into which the dead were supposed to descend. It was inherited from the old Jewish idea of Sheol, the underworld, called in the Greek Hades, where the souls of the departed were believed to await final judgment. Our Lord sanctioned this belief in an intermediate state by His promise to the penitent thief, 'To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise' (Luke xxiii. 43), while He also used the current expression 'in Abraham's bosom' to express the rest of the soul of the poor man in His parable of Dives and Lazarus. Dives is described as being 'in Hades' and 'in torments' (Luke xvi. 22, 23).

So far as the words in our Creed go, we are not led to put a larger interpretation on them than Rufinus did when he explained them to be simply a synonym for 'buried.' We may say, in the words of Irenæus, that Christ once stood in the midst of the shadow of death, that He shared the condition of departed spirits. But we are certainly encouraged by the words of S. Peter to avow the early belief of the Church that Christ's descent brought some benefit both to the Saints of the Old Covenant and to some at least who had died in their sins.

*The third day He rose again from the dead.*

This is the central truth of the Creed, as it is the central fact of history, to which everything else is subordinate. It is of the utmost importance that every

[1] *Adv. haer.*, iv. 27, 2.

believer should examine himself, and should weigh the evidence again and again, and give a plain answer to S. Paul's unambiguous challenge: *if Christ hath not been raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins* (1 Cor. xv. 17). In consequence of the perplexities which some critical students of the Gospels have raised, it is better to confine our attention in the first instance to the admitted epistles of S. Paul alone. In the chapter from which I have quoted he gives a straightforward summary of the evidence which he himself had tested to confirm his own testimony since the day of his conversion. Had not Cephas seen the risen Lord, then the Twelve, then five hundred brethren, the majority of whom were still alive in 57 A.D.? What S. Paul says of the testimony of others is enough to exclude the possibility of delusion in the case of his own vision. When other men see as we see, hear as we hear, speak as we speak, we can dismiss the suspicion that our organs are unsound.

When we turn from the testimony of S. Paul to the Gospels, we must remember that it is notoriously difficult for people to describe any event, agreeing as to particulars.

May I venture to illustrate this from personal experience? After Bishop Lightfoot's funeral I agreed with a friend that we should both write independent accounts of the service in Durham Cathedral. When we compared them we found that we had contradicted each other flatly in regard to one detail in respect of which only one was an eye-witness. But the accuracy of the general description was not affected. Both of us had been profoundly moved by the sight of the vast congregation gathered to show their affection for their beloved Bishop. So in the Gospels the discrepancies in details do not destroy the value of the testimony borne by eye-witnesses to the risen Lord. Nor are we bound

by any theory of Inspiration which would forbid us to accept records that did not agree in particulars. We believe that God inspired the penman, not the pen. It was of set purpose that our Lord, when He chose His Apostles, selected plain men, of the lower middle class, many of them fishermen, practical men, who could tell a story simply, who would be good witnesses in a law-court.

Many theories have been suggested, and have received careful consideration. No one now believes that our Lord swooned and afterwards revived. But there are those who still persuade themselves that the disciples after reflection on passages of the Old Testament (Ps. xvi. 10, Isa. liii. 10-12) imagined that they saw in visions the Lord to whom they had clung with such intense affection. The persistent tradition that the Resurrection took place on the third day does not allow time for such imaginings of men who were at the time utterly distracted and hopeless. Still less does such a theory explain the subsequent cessation of the visions at the end of forty days, when imagined visions might be expected to multiply, whereas, as a matter of fact, with the exception of the appearance to S. Paul, they cease. We may say with Dr. Sanday: 'A belief that has had such incalculably momentous results must have had an adequate cause. No apparition, no mere hallucination of the senses, ever yet moved the world.'[1]

From another point of view Dr. Kattenbusch, after years of patient toil on the history of the Apostles' Creed, came to the conclusion that S. Paul believed rightly in the open grave, and that we have therefore good grounds for believing in it also. Such conscien-

[1] Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. 'Jesus Christ, p. 641.

tious work as his in the constant reviewing of the evidence deserves far more consideration than the changing expressions of opinion by those who assert that they still cling to the hope of the Easter message while they cannot accept the evidence of the witnesses.

They suggest that the Christ of Experience has convinced them that He lives at the right hand of God. What does it matter, they add, that the Christ of History was mistaken about the raising of His Body from the tomb? What does it matter? With S. Paul's passionate earnestness we reply, 'Our faith is vain if we may not believe that He really rose.' With great power gave the Apostles witness of the Resurrection, and there is no record of great power accompanying any other Gospel than that of the Apostles. It would be strange indeed if it has been reserved for the twentieth century to bring forth fruit of spiritual zeal more intense, of moral victories more complete than those which were manifested in the history of Saul of Tarsus.

The Resurrection vindicated the cause of the despised prophet of Nazareth, rewarded His faithful ministry and His patient suffering, a recompense for the obscure years of humble life in a village home hidden in God like the lives of many of His most devout followers. The Body in which He rose was a glorified, spiritual Body, no longer subject to the limitations of space and time. His sudden appearing at times terrified beholders (Luke xxiv. 37), but the gentleness of His speech reassured them, and then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Even at the risk of being misunderstood we must be true to our Creed and maintain our conviction that no other faith can convert the world.

The famous answer of Talleyrand, quoted by Sir J. Seeley,[1] is not out of date. To a man who asked him

[1] *Natural Religion*, p. 181.

how he could commend a new religion to a generation with deaf ears, he replied: 'There is one plan which you might at least try; I should recommend you to be crucified and to rise again the third day.'

*Ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father,* R—(*of God the Father almighty,* T).

It was expedient that He should visit and encourage His faithful followers, but it was even more expedient for them that He should go away, and raise the Manhood which He had assumed for their sakes to the throne, that He might send to them the Spirit of grace and glory. Then they would go forth into the world, no longer associating His Presence with particular places only, but able to find in it everywhere 'the fulness of joy' (Ps. xvi. 11).

The only primitive records of the Ascension are set by S. Luke at the end of his Gospel and then at the beginning of the Acts, as the proper preface to his account of the gift of the Spirit.[1] Its credibility is attested by its majestic calm, and its fitness in the eyes of the disciples who returned with joy to Jerusalem.

The fact that S. Paul briefly mentions the Ascension proves that he knew something of the Act which marked the end of the appearances of the risen Lord.[2] His epistles represent mere fragments of his teaching.

To those who believe in a risen Christ the Ascension seems to be a natural sequel. We must be careful indeed

[1] The words *He was parted from them* in his Gospel (xxiv. 51) are an early addition to the text. We cannot lay much stress on the verses which have been added to St. Mark's Gospel in place of its lost ending.

[2] Kattenbusch, ii. 649, suggests that the fact that R betrays no interest in the idea of a Return of the Risen Lord to intercourse with His disciples, paying regard only to what happened to Jesus Himself and what He did, is a proof of high antiquity.

to think of it as rather a change of condition than a change of place. Needless difficulty has been caused by mistaken exposition. Thus Bishop Pearson writes:—

'I am fully persuaded, that the only-begotten and eternal Son of God, after He rose from the dead, did with the same soul and body with which He rose, by a true and local translation, convey Himself from the earth on which He lived, through all the regions of the air, through all the celestial orbs, until He came unto the heaven of heavens, the most glorious presence of the majesty of God.'[1]

It is possible, as Bishop Harvey Goodwin suggests, to interpret this poetically. But there is an impassable gulf between words which speak of local translation through the regions of the air and those which speak of that wholly immaterial spiritual reality, the most glorious presence of the majesty of God.

The vision witnessed to the spiritual lesson. The sky is the symbol of heaven. That He should go up and vanish is an abiding call to us to ascend with Him 'in heart and mind,' that we may 'with Him continually dwell.' We are tempted on the one hand by the very perfectness of His Manhood to forget His Divinity, and on the other to conceive of His Manhood as swallowed up in His Divine glory. The truth is that—

'In that unknown world in which our thoughts become instantly lost, so different from what we are now acquainted with, that our present knowledge will utterly vanish away, and be succeeded by another faculty altogether, ere we can understand the things of heaven; still there is one object on which our thoughts and imaginations may fasten, no less than our affections; amidst the light, dark from excess of brilliance, which invests the throne of God, we may yet discern the gracious form of the Son of Man.'[2]

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[1] *On the Creed, ad loc.*

[2] T. K. Arnold, Sermon vii.

*He sitteth at the right hand of God.* In the present Faith contemplates all that History has to tell of Jesus. But History can only bring us to the verge of the present glory of Christ. The aspects of faith in the Old Roman Creed are never of a speculative character. The writer keeps a practical interest in view. Christ is not thought of as inactive but only as honoured.

*Whence He is coming to judge,* R—(*From thence He shall come to judge,* T)—*the quick and the dead.*

The best commentary on these words is found in the so-called Second Epistle of Clement, a Roman sermon of the early years of the second century: 'Brethren, we ought so to think of Jesus Christ as of God, as of the judge of quick and dead. And we ought not to think mean things of our salvation; for when we think mean things of Him we expect also to receive mean things. And they that listen as concerning mean things do wrong; and we ourselves do wrong, not knowing whence and by whom and unto what place we were called, and how many things Jesus Christ endured to suffer for our sakes.'[1]

It may be well to point out that the cases in which the Old Roman Creed omits the clauses on which I have commented in this chapter, do not justify the dogmatic argument which some writers have built upon them. The Person of Christ is taught from the same point of view as in later creeds. He is regarded as the pre-existent Word of the Father who became Man.

An American writer, Dr. M'Giffert, expresses surprise that there is no mention of the Baptism.[2] Some early heretics regarded the Baptism of our Lord as the

[1] *Clement of Rome, ed.* Lightfoot, p. 380.
[2] *The Apostles' Creed,* p. 6.

moment when He was deified. So do some modern writers in a Unitarian interest claim that the account of His Baptism is the beginning of safe tradition about Him. Such teaching cuts away the very root of belief in the Atonement, because it makes all the difference who it was that offered Himself upon the Cross for our salvation.

And such partial views are not countenanced by the Old Roman Creed, since it begins with His Birth.

An interesting question may be raised at this point. Did the author of the Old Roman Creed know the Synoptic Gospels? Dr. Kattenbusch thinks that he did, but that the Gospels did not stand behind him, so to speak, as a book. He drew rather on oral than on written teaching. He breathes the same atmosphere as the authors of the Synoptic Gospels themselves. He tells of the coming of the Messiah Jesus from God, of His earthly life, of His Cross and Grave, of His exaltation. The leading idea is the wonder of His being. He is true Man, having an earthly mother, and He is God's Son. The wonder of His Birth only suggests the wonder of His whole Person. As a King's son maintains his nobility in poverty and servitude, and we say when he comes to his own that he had a right to such exaltation, so has Jesus the tokens of Divinity in His humiliation. The author of the Roman Creed expresses in a powerful way the impression of the Person of Christ, implied in S. Peter's confession, '*Thou art the Christ*,' in the Synoptic Gospels. And he expresses it in a form which has points of contact with Pauline teaching.[1]

[1] Kattenbusch, ii. 497 f.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

One of the greatest needs of this age is a more profound belief in God the Holy Ghost, and a more profound study of the Revelation of His Person and of His Work. A foundation for this is laid in the Creed, but it is only a foundation. The doctrine of the Holy Ghost did not come to the front till the end of the fourth century. Then we find Cyril's Jerusalem Creed containing the words: 'And in one Holy Ghost the Paraclete who spake in the prophets,' expanded in the revised Creed, accepted at Constantinople and Chalcedon, which has become our Nicene Creed: 'And in the Holy Ghost the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets.' Fuller expression of the doctrine of the Person of Christ had led naturally to fuller expression of the complementary doctrine of the Spirit. As S. Paul wrote in the first days: 'No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost.' And in regard to the mystery of the Holy Incarnation we confess that it is only under His influence that we can think or speak worthily. Only more prayer to the Holy Ghost, and more diligent study of the conditions under which He has manifested Himself in the past, will make plain the difference between sincerity and insincerity in the interpretation of our Creed, the difference between the essential contents of our belief, the faith of the Gospel

to which at all costs we must be loyal, and the changing opinions about modes of expression which must vary as time goes on with the growth of the common mind, or to paraphrase S. Paul's word, 'sanctified common sense.'

It is true that Confirmations are frequent, and preparation of Confirmation candidates is carefully carried out. But it is a question how often they are afterwards reminded of the gift which they received, and bidden to stir it up. We exist to justify the ways of God to ourselves, in the face of hostile criticism to give an answer for the hope that is in us, to explain that the teaching of S. Augustine or the Athanasian Creed contains no more than is implicitly contained in the teaching of S. Paul's admitted epistles. Is it most important to construct a logical argument to connect the teaching of S. Paul with the teaching of S. John, or to take S. Paul's own advice and seek to stir up the gift of the Spirit within us, to turn from the cisterns, often the broken cisterns of our own syllogisms, illustrations, formulas, to the source of the living water which is to be in us a well of water springing up unto eternal life? We feel often thirsty for the satisfaction of spiritual needs, for help in contrition, for the deepening of penitence, for grace to sin no more in the old way, more faith, more hope, more love. How much more earnestly should we pray, how much more earnestly should we strive. We fail, and fail again, and deserve to fail, because we forget so often to reflect on the promise: 'Not by might nor by power but by My spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.'

We turn to admitted epistles of S. Paul.

In 1 Cor. ii. 10 he writes: 'The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him. Even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God.' Here a profound analogy is

drawn between human personality and the Divine Personality of which it is a far-off copy. The spirit of man reflects on the work of the past day, on his actions, his moods, his words. He seems almost to himself like a double personality, and yet he is conscious in his self-consciousness that he is one. But man's personality is finite, incomplete. He was not made to dwell alone. The family is the true unit of human life. Man needs and seeks society, and finds therein the satisfaction of his deepest need, love: loving and loved, his spirit bears witness in his self-consciousness that this is the fulness of his life. It has been beautifully said: 'To love is the perfect of the verb to live.' The sundered lives of men image dimly as in a mirror the supreme truth of the undivided life of God, whose Love finds perfect satisfaction within, not without the Divine Personality revealed to us as Triune, the Spirit of the Divine Self-Consciousness finding in the Son the express image of the Father's Substance, and by His Fellowship uniting Father and Son in the eternal perfection of Divine Love.

All human words fail to express such a mystery. They are thrown out, as it were, at an object too vast for them to measure. But the words of S. Paul seem to lead directly to such speculation, and confirm the wisdom of S. Augustine, who has done so much to mould Western theology.

In the light of modern criticism it is all-important to lay stress on the benediction (2 Cor. xiii. 14), in which S. Paul speaks again of 'the fellowship of the Holy Spirit' as uniting us to 'the love of God' and 'the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Here the mystery of Divine Life is clearly expressed, as in 1 Cor. xii. 4-6, when he leads our thoughts by 'the same Spirit,' who teaches us to confess 'the same Lord,' up to faith in 'the same God,' who worketh all in all.

We do not look in letters for a complete system of doctrine, but we do expect to find out what are the ruling ideas of the writer's mind. And we do not turn to the Epistle to the Romans, which was to some extent a more elaborate statement of the Apostle's teaching at that period, without finding the same conviction of the personal influence of the Spirit clearly brought out. In fact the eighth chapter is the crown of the preceding argument. He relies on the power of the Spirit to awaken the soul to a sense of the need of forgiveness, to assurance of it, and to joy in daily guidance: 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God.' Pentecost completes the teaching of Calvary. The Spirit within us makes intercession with unutterable groanings.

From these epistles, therefore, we are entitled to argue that within twenty-five years from the Resurrection of our Lord, S. Paul was teaching about the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit what is taught both in the Gospels and the Acts. Apart from all questions as to the date and authorship of these books we need have no hesitation in accepting what we read in them about the Spirit as corroborated by the earliest Christian tradition.

Having verified this point, we are free to follow the lines of Dr. Swete's admirable article *Holy Spirit*.[1]

In the Old Testament the Spirit of God is, in the great majority of passages, 'the vital energy of the divine nature, corresponding to the higher vitality of man.' He creates (Gen. i. 2), sustains created life (Job xxxiv. 14), bestows intellectual gifts (the artist Bezalel, Ex. xxxvi. 1, the soldier Joshua, Deut. xxxiv. 9, the wise Solomon, 1 Kings iii. 28). The fulness of His gifts are reserved for the Messiah (Isa. xi. 2), 'the spirit of wisdom and understanding (intellectual gifts), of counsel and power (practical powers), of the knowledge

[1] Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, ii. p. 402.

and fear of Jehovah (religious endowments).' Also, in the moral and religious life of men, it is He who imparts 'the clean heart' and 'steadfast spirit.' It is true that when He is spoken of as brooding, ruling, speaking, guiding, it is only in a quasi-personal sense as the living energy of a personal God. But the way was thus prepared for the fuller revelation.

In the New Testament the new Dispensation is represented as ushered in with a revival of prophecy. John the Baptist's parents were inspired by the Spirit. Simeon was informed by the Spirit of the presence of the infant Christ. The miracle of the Conception and the Virgin Birth is ascribed to the Spirit (Luke i. 35, Matt. i. 18-20), and as the Spirit sanctified His Manhood throughout its growth, so did the Spirit come to consecrate His public life at His Baptism. He claimed to have been thus anointed (Luke iv. 18 f.), and to convey to the Apostles the same gift that they might carry on His work, when He breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Ghost' (John xx. 22).

The Ascension was followed by the fuller outpouring of the Spirit. Not only did the Apostles constantly rely on His guidance and on His strength enabling them to bear their witness, but as Dr. Swete says: 'It is a standing proof of the reality of the miracle of Pentecost that the first age of the Church should have produced a series of writings which, in the elevation of their spiritual tone and the fruitfulness of their teaching, remain absolutely alone. Side by side with this monument of the Spirit's work must be placed another—the Christian Society or Catholic Church.'[1]

In the Synoptic Gospels the references to the Spirit do not carry us much further than the Old Testament until we come to the Baptismal Formula (Matt. xxviii. 19),

[1] Art. *cit.*, p. 407.

which teaches us that the Spirit is a living Person not to be identified with the Father or the Son, yet one with them in the mystery of the Divine Life. Fuller light is cast on this teaching by the discourses recorded by S. John on the night of the Last Supper, which add to the fragmentary teaching given to Nicodemus (John iii.), and the woman of Samaria (John iv.), and describe the Spirit as Christ's representative, an Advocate who is able to carry irresistible conviction, a Guide into all truth (John xiv., xv., xvi.).

The witness of S. Paul not only, as we have seen, confirms this teaching as to the distinct personality and the true Divinity of the Spirit, but also illustrates at many points the mode of the Spirit's working in the souls of men. He conferred on the first generation special and miraculous gifts, such as prophecy, and was manifested in the permanent strengthening of the virtues of faith, hope, and love. He consecrates our bodies also as temples of God (1 Cor. iii. 16, vi. 19) which He will raise in the likeness of Christ's Resurrection (Rom. viii. 11), a spiritual body (1 Cor. xv. 42-44). His indwelling works a new life (Rom. viii. 2, x. 13), and in the Church at large He is 'the bond of Catholic unity (Eph. iv. 3), the source of ministerial gifts (Eph. iv. 7-12), and sacramental grace (Tit. iii. 5).'

### *The Holy Catholic Church.*

The words *holy Church* stood in the Old Roman Creed from the first. The word *catholic* had indeed been added to the vocabulary of Christian terms, but it did not come into the Roman Creed until its final revision.

In the New Testament the word Church is used both of single communities of Christians, *e.g.* those who met in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, or the house of Aristo-

bulus (Rom. xvi. 5, 10), and also of the whole body of Christians. In this latter use it has two aspects. It may refer either to the actual Church or to the ideal of the Church in any age. By the actual Church I mean a community of individuals whose conduct, as the best of them are most ready to acknowledge, in no age comes up to the level of their profession, so that the effectiveness of the Divine plan for the redemption of the world is marred by their shortcomings. On the other hand the ideal has never been lost sight of, and successive reformations, or revivals, definite manifestations of the guiding presence of the Holy Ghost through the long course of Church history, have quickened in different generations the sense of corporate fellowship, or the sense of the need of self-consecration, or the earnest desire to be less worldly. Thus the teaching of S. Paul on the ideal Church as the Body (Rom. xii. 5), the Temple (1 Cor. iii. 10-15), and the Bride of Christ (2 Cor. xi. 2), has been pressed home to the conscience of faithless and stubborn generations by the only irrefragable argument, the lives of their best contemporaries.

In the actual Church membership is acquired through Baptism, for which candidates must prepare by Repentance and Faith (Acts ii. 38.) The baptized Christian, reconciled to God (Rom. v. 10), looks for sanctification by the Spirit (1 Cor. vi. 11), and in the common life and worship of the community is bound to adopt the Christian standard of conduct. We cannot here trace the history of Christian worship, in daily services (Acts ii. 46), or on the Lord's Day (Acts xx. 7), meeting for the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 17-34), or for mutual edification in prayer, praise, and prophecy (1 Cor. xiv.).[1] The intense conviction of the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, which led the early Christians to consecrate themselves

[1] See art. 'Church,' Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible* (S. C. Gayford).

so unreservedly to Christ's service, has led often to the suggestion that the moral ideals of primitive Christianity are worthy of all acceptation if only they can be separated from the dogmas in which the theology of succeeding generations has crystallised round them. We must ruthlessly attack the fallacy on which such an argument is based. S. Paul when he makes such an appeal: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God* (Rom. xii. 1), links it by the word *therefore* to the whole section of dogmatic teaching which proceeds. And all the later theology is only a fuller analysis of the experience which led S. Paul to worship Christ in the Spirit.

The congregations gathered from different houses met at the house of more prominent members to discuss common affairs, and the epistles of the Apostles were addressed to these larger gatherings. The enthusiasm of such a larger body is vividly described by the martyr Ignatius on his way from Antioch to suffer at Rome. Writing to the Church of Smyrna, he lays bare the secret of his personal religion: 'Why, then, have I delivered myself over to death, unto fire, unto sword, unto wild beasts? But near to the sword, near to God, in company with wild beasts, in company with God. Only let it be in the name of Jesus Christ, so that we may suffer together with Him. I endure all things, seeing that He Himself enableth me who is perfect Man.' Then he turns to their common needs and bids them (c. 8) 'shun divisions,' 'follow your bishop as Jesus Christ followed the Father.' 'Let no man do aught of things pertaining to the Church apart from the bishop. Let that be held a valid eucharist which is under the bishop or one to whom he shall have committed it. Wheresoever the bishop shall appear there

let the people be; even as where Jesus may be there is the universal (catholic) Church.'

The glowing words need no comment. The word *catholic* with this meaning *universal* was common in that age. It had been used by philosophers, and Polybius used it in such an expression as 'universal history.' It soon, however, acquired what Bishop Lightfoot called a technical meaning. To the primary idea of extension were added the ideas of doctrine and unity. 'But this latter sense grows out of the earlier. The truth was the same everywhere, *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.* The heresies were partial, scattered, localised, isolated.'[1] Half a century later than this letter of S. Ignatius the word *catholic* was used as an epithet of *Church* in the letter of the Church of Smyrna on the martyrdom of Polycarp, their bishop. Three times it has the meaning *universal*; the fourth time, if the common text is correct, Polycarp is called bishop of the Catholic Church in Smyrna. The Latin version, however, and a MS. at Moscow, read *holy Church*, so that we cannot claim this as beyond question the first appearance of the later sense.

We find it about A.D. 180 in the Muratorian Fragment, a list of canonical and uncanonical writings, which mentions heretical writings not received in the *Catholic Church.* At the close of the second century it appears in the writings of Tertullian, and of Clement of Alexandria. Thus Clement writes:

'It is evident that these later heresies and those which are still more recent are spurious innovations on the oldest and truest Church. From what has been said I think it has been made plain that unity is a characteristic of the true, the really ancient Church, into which those that are righteous according

[1] Lightfoot, *S. Ignatius*, ii. 311.

to the divine purpose are enrolled. For God being one and the Lord being one, that also which is supremely honoured is the object of praise, because it stands alone, being a copy of the one First Principle: at any rate the one Church, which they strive to break up into many sects, is bound up with the principle of Unity. We say, then, that the ancient and Catholic Church stands alone in essence and idea and principle and pre-eminence, gathering together, by the will of one God through the one Lord, into the unity of the one faith, built upon the fitting covenants (or rather the one covenant given at different times) all those who are already enlisted in it, whom God foreordained, having known before the foundation of the world that they would be righteous.'[1]

In the fourth century Cyril of Jerusalem explains the word as follows:

'It is called Catholic, then, because it extends over all the world from one end of the earth to the other; and because it teaches universally and completely one and all the doctrines which ought to come to men's knowledge concerning things both visible and invisible, heavenly and earthly; and because it brings into subjection to godliness the whole race of mankind, governors and governed, learned and unlearned; and because it universally treats and heals the whole class of sins which are committed by soul or body, and possesses in itself every form of virtue which is named, both in deeds and words, and in every kind of spiritual gifts.'[2]

*The Communion of Saints.*

The interpretation of this clause is to some extent bound up with the view taken of its history. By far the most probable interpretation, however, is that which is given by our English version, the fellowship of holy people, not fellowship in holy things, *i.e.* sacraments. If we trace it back to the third century with Dom. Morin, we find that a strong sense of fellowship bound together men such as S. Firmilian and S. Cyprian, who were contending for what appeared to them to be primi-

[1] *Miscellanies*, bk. vii. c. xvii. [2] Cat. x.

tive Catholic doctrine. Though their opinions were not accepted by later generations, the sense of fellowship did not evaporate. It was enjoyed quite as keenly by the orthodox leaders in the Arian controversy, whose arguments have been completely justified by the subsequent reflection of the Church. Separation in sacramental fellowship between Catholics and heretics was inevitable. But the first sermon on the Creed which comments on this clause explains it as fellowship *of* holy people, not *in* holy things. Niceta of Remesiana writes:

'What is the Church but the congregation of all saints? . . . Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, all the just who have been, are, or shall be, are one Church because sanctified by one faith and life, marked by one Spirit, they constitute one Body. . . . Believe, then, that in this one Church thou wilt attain to *the communion of saints*. Know that this is the one Catholic Church established in every region of the earth, whose communion thou oughtest firmly to hold.'[1]

It is true that S. Augustine sometimes uses the word *communion* in a concrete rather than an abstract sense, making *communion of saints* in his writings against the Donatists a synonym for the congregation or church of saints. And in one of his sermons he has the phrase *communion of sacraments* just in the place in which Niceta speaks of *communion of saints*. But this idea of *communion of sacraments* must not be set in a false antithesis to the idea of a *communion of saints*. The one is the complement of the other, and, so to speak, its sacrament, the outward visible sign of the inward spiritual grace which is the joy of the saintly life. S. Augustine's view tended to verge from one to the other. And I feel no difficulty in supposing that such a natural tendency explains the sporadic appearance of the explanation 'fellowship' in holy things at a later time. A sermon,

[1] *On the Creed*, c. 10.

probably of the sixth century, goes so far as to say that the clause teaches that the faithful should communicate every Lord's Day. And a Norman-French version of the twelfth century translates the words 'La communion des saintes choses.'

The Gallican tradition, however, at the time when the clause came more and more widely into use, *i.e.* in the fifth century, maintained the other view. There was a tendency in the Gallican Church to limit the title 'saint' to the departed, especially martyrs. Faustus of Riez wrote: 'Let us believe in the *communion of saints*, not as though they shared the prerogatives of God; let us do homage to the fear and love of God manifested in them; they are worthy of our veneration, inasmuch as by their contempt for death they induce in us a spirit of devotion to God, and of eager longing for the life to come.'

Another writer is less moderate: 'This clause shuts the mouths of those who blasphemously refuse to honour the ashes of the saints and friends of God, and who do not hold that the glorious memory of the blessed martyrs is to be cherished by doing honour to their tombs; such persons are false to their Creed, and have given the lie to the promise which they made to Christ at the font.' Such language led to the equally extravagant opposition headed by Vigilantius.

Two later sermons may be quoted. One explains the words thus: 'The association and partnership in hope by which we are bound to the saints who have departed in the faith we have embraced.'[1] Another has: 'Whereas in this life each believer has only an individual share in the gifts of the Spirit, in eternity they will be the common property of all, since then each saint will find in others what he lacks in himself.'[2]

[1] Ps. August., *Sermon* 242. [2] *Ib.* 240.

Our survey of the history of the word *catholic,* used by S. Ignatius so freely when the heart of the martyr beat high in the springtime of the life of the Church, shows that experience corrected the unbounded hopefulness of his interpretation. But the secondary meaning developed by Clement of Alexandria, which limits the title to those who are loyal to the Catholic Faith, is not a surrender of the ideal as such. Our vision of the holy Church, limited as we admit it to be, is limited for a season. We see the beginning and not the end. The great paradox of the Christian life is: 'We are what we are to be.' We expect, if it is only in the ages to come, the reconciliation of those whose teaching is now differentiated either by Romanist excess or Puritan defect. And it is the task of the Church of England to carry on to succeeding generations the spirit of the teaching in the Sarum Order for the Visitation of the Sick: 'Dearest brother, dost thou believe . . . in the communion of saints, that is, that all men who live in charity are partakers of all the gifts of grace which are dispensed in the Church, and that all who are in fellowship with the just here in the life of grace are in fellowship with them in glory?'

### *The forgiveness of sins.*

This clause is found from the first and in all developed creed-forms. The oldest form of the Creed of Jerusalem added to the Baptismal formula, 'and in one baptism of repentance for remission of sins,' which has come down to us in our Nicene Creed as 'I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins.'

Perhaps the impression made on the mind of a cultured and earnest heathen by this fundamental Christian doctrine has never been more eloquently expressed than

by S. Cyprian. He was well born, a man of large means, a lawyer of good standing and versed in public affairs, who was converted in the prime of life and laid down his life for Christ twelve years later. He speaks of his unbaptized life as one of 'darkness, ignorance of self, estrangement.'

'I seconded my own besetting vices; I despaired of improvement; I looked on my faults as natural and home-born; I even favoured them. But so soon as the stain of my former life was wiped away by help of the birth-giving wave, and a calm pure light from above flooded my purged breast; so soon as I drank of the spirit from heaven and was restored to new manhood by a second nativity; then, marvellously, doubts began to clear; secrets revealed themselves; the dark grew light; seeming difficulties gave way; supposed impossibilities vanished; I was able to recognise that what was born after the flesh and lived under the rule of sin, was of the earth earthy, while that which was animated by the Holy Spirit began to belong to God.'[1]

Such words bear pathetic testimony to the universal consciousness of sin, which was widely recognised by the great thinkers of the ancient world. The essence of Christian teaching on the subject is contained in S. John's sentence: 'Sin is the transgression of the law.'[2] That is to say that sin is in the will. It is not inherent in the body as the Manicheans taught, nor the result of ignorance as many Gnostics believed, nor to be identified with desire as Buddhists maintain. But a sinful will affects the whole being, 'and as acts gradually become habitual, and one bad habit leads to another, as it invariably does, the entire personality grows more and more evil, more and more alienated from its source of life in God. And this works for death in two ways, in consequence of the twofold nature of personality. Socially the evil person becomes a harmful influence

[1] Benson's *Cyprian*, p. 16 (from *Ad Don.*, p. 4). [2] 1 John. iii. 4.

and example, making for the disturbance, the disorder, the disintegration, the ultimate destruction of society; while as an individual he undergoes a similar process of dissolution within himself. For with the loss of his spiritual self-control he loses all his inner unity. "The horses," as Plato puts it, "of the soul's chariot pull different ways." The man grows double-minded, his various faculties come in conflict with each other; and moral anarchy leads to mental distortion and physical disease.'[1] This admirable analysis of the result of actual sin brings us to the consideration of that which is the main theme of Christian thanksgiving, the forgiveness of sins. Nature knows no forgiveness. The wrong done is irreparable, and the punishment is self-acting. An awakened sinner finds no refuge in remorse, but a torture-chamber. So far as sins against his fellow-men are concerned, he may meet with the kindest treatment at their hands and full forgiveness, yet he can never forgive himself. In the case of sins against himself he may bear the punishment of ill-health due to self-indulgence with stoical composure, but this will not console him while he feels that others who are innocent are made to suffer with him, the guilty. The only comfort and consolation is to be found in the belief that all sin is in the last resort a sin against God. Such a conviction adds poignancy to the feeling of sorrow over wrongs done to others, but brings also the assurance that hereafter, if not now, perfect love shall be restored between injured and injurer. For this no less than perfect knowledge of the offence is needed, and *with God all things are possible.* This is not for us a question of speculation, but of experience. We found our doctrine of forgiveness on the facts of the Revelation in Christ, whose Passion is its seal and whose Resurrection is its

[1] Illingworth, *Christian Character*, p. 11.

pledge.[1] For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Son to die that we might live.

This commending of God's love to us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, encourages us to look for help to the analogy of parental forgiveness that we may understand the nature of God's forgiveness. And in our Lord's own parable the father of the Prodigal Son is brought before us as righteous in forgiving. He loves his child and distinguishes between him and his sin, which he cannot forgive as long as the son's heart is wilfully set upon it. Truly repenting he welcomes him with open arms. As Dr. Moberly puts it very beautifully: 'Such forgiveness is the sunshine in which character grows.'[2] There may be something in the son which is a result of what the parent is, so that it is the goodness of the parent which is reflected in the child, and makes possible the beginning of yearning or repentant love. 'And so far the forgiveness of a parent may in God's Spirit reflect with wonderful nearness, the meaning of God's forgiveness of sinful man.'[3]

The root difficulty of most men to-day arises from the fact that they 'do not think in this personal fashion of the relations of God and men, but dwell mentally in a world of abstract ideas and natural laws.'[4] Therefore it is unreal to speak of forgiveness. It is just as much unreal to speak of sin at all. From this point of view man's actions are all accounted for, being the inevitable effects of natural causes. He is no more to blame than the stone over which we stumble in the dark. Our conscience revolts against such reasoning. We are conscious that in sin we not only violate our own nature and an abstract law, but also the will of the living God.

[1] Westcott, *Historic Faith*, p. 130 f.
[2] Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, p. 66. [3] *Ib.*
[4] J. Denney in *Questions of Faith*, p. 156.

And in the experience of Christians we know that there is nothing in the spiritual world more effective than forgiveness. With his future apparently mortgaged to his past, unable to escape from the consequences of his sin, unable to forget the chain of evil habit, even after it is broken, the sinner comes to God in Christ and is set free by the power of Divine love which transcends nature. There is nothing commonplace in the Creed. Every statement is designed to set us thinking. We are led on to think of Atonement, of cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ. But such doctrines are of the nature of reflections on the great fact proclaimed by the Creed, as it was proclaimed by the Apostles: God forgives. All the rest, the explanation of the cost of forgiveness to God, the repudiation of the idea of cheap forgiveness, which would imply that sin is nothing to God, follows naturally. As Dr. Denney finely expresses it: 'There are no words in the world that bring home to us the cost of forgiveness like the New Testament words about the death of Jesus. . . . These are the words that make forgiveness credible, because they make it great.'[1]

*The resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.*

The English Creed set forth in *The Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man* in 1543 substituted the word *body* for *flesh*. This translation came into use in the daily services; but the more exact translation *flesh* has been continuously preserved in our Baptismal Creed. The (so-called) Athanasian Creed teaches that *men shall rise again with their bodies*. Our Nicene Creed has *the resurrection of the dead*, but the expression is comparatively rare, Cyril's earlier Jerusalem Creed having had *and of the flesh*. In 1 Cor. xv. S. Paul uses both

[1] *Questions of Faith*, p. 174.

expressions, *resurrection of the dead* and *resurrection of the body*, practically as synonyms, and very definitely teaches that *resurrection of the body* must not be taken to mean literal recovery and combination of the same material particles: *We sow not that body that shall be.* This is a point on which Bishop Pearson's teaching needs correction. Vague appeals to God's omnipotence must give place to thankful acceptance of God's revelation. The flesh in which we see and handle, in which we hear and taste, is not ourselves, but only the outward expression of ourselves:

> 'For of the soul the body form doth take,
> For soul is form and doth the body make.'

'What S. Paul teaches us to expect is the manifestation of a power of life according to law under new conditions. *God giveth to every seed a body of its own*: not arbitrarily but according to His most righteous will. The seed determines what the plant shall be, but it does not contain the plant. The golden ears with which we trust again to see the fields waving are not the bare grains which were committed to the earth. The reconstruction of the seed when the season has come round would not give us the flower or the fruit for which we hope. Nay rather the seed dies, is dissolved, that the life may clothe itself in a nobler form. True it is that we cannot in this way escape from a physical continuity; but it is a continuity of life and not of simple reconstruction. And S. Paul warns us that the change which we cannot follow is greater than the changes of earth which we can follow: that the development of life goes on: that the manifestation of life takes place, as I said, under new conditions. Everything, he tells us, which characterises a material body, the flower no less than the seed, shall then cease to be. The unbroken continuity shall enter into a new

sphere, unaffected by the limitations through which earthly bodies are what they are. *It is sown in corruption: it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour: it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness: it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body.'*[1]

Quite early in the second century the doctrine was denied by Marcion and the controversy lasted on. Indeed, it is not yet extinct.[2]

*And the life everlasting.*

The African Church treasured this addition at all events from the third century, and we welcome it in the final revision of our Creed. It carries on our thoughts beyond the Judgment of the Great Day, beyond the time of waiting in what we call the Intermediate State, which is only hinted at in the reference to our Lord's descent into Hades, when the soul freed from clogging disabilities of this earthly life shall be free to know the truth and rejoice in the salvation of God, when the body raised as a spiritual and glorious body shall be given back fit for the Vision of God and the life of heaven.

In the great 'Regeneration' (Matt. xix. 28) of which the Lord speaks, when the first heavens and the first earth shall have passed away (Rev. xxi. 1), the whole created universe which now groans in pain shall be 'delivered from the bondage of corruption' (Rom. viii. 18-22). Of the nature of the life hereafter we know but little, but we are assured that the eternal life in which we shall be 'as the angels' (Matt. xxii. 30, Mark xii. 25, Luke xx. 36) will be one in which happiness is

[1] Westcott, *Historic Faith*, p. 137 f.

[2] See S. C. Gayford's *The Future State*, p. 82: 'Much that is insanitary in our manner of burial is really based upon the same thought.'

perfected, not merely by the ending of sorrow, pain, and death, but also by the enjoyment of the Presence of God in which is fulness of joy, and by the opportunity of work for Him in which all the activities of body, mind, and spirit shall find the fullest scope. The future life is to be a social life. The New Jerusalem, in which the Apostle saw the redeemed rejoicing in the service of God, is a holy city that typifies the continuance of all sanctified social service. All who have laboured for the glory of God and the good of men, who have been called to dare for Christ's sake—and in the front rank we place missionaries on foreign service—will find all their energies quickened and their self-sacrifice fruitful, and that the old barriers which prejudice and selfishness and ignorance had raised to hinder them have vanished like a dream.

The question rises unbidden: For whom is this glorious future in store? It is impossible for us to judge. We know that the faithless and abominable must be shut out as unworthy of such blessedness. At the Great Day we shall be manifested in that trait of character which has been moulded not only according to the tenor of the actions of which other men knew, but also by thoughts and feelings which have never found expression in word or deed, yet aid in making up the man's account with God. No metaphors expressing pain or loss of this earthly life can measure the misery of a conscience remorsefully self-accusing in the light of truth, brought face to face not only with Divine Justice but also with Divine Love in which our Lord has sought them, that of His love and pity He might redeem them. But we cannot discern more than the principles revealed to us of His most just Judgment. It has been well said that 'the Church has her long list of saints, but has never inserted one name in any catalogue of the damned.'

Now we know but in part, then shall we know even as we are known (1 Cor. xiii. 1). We shall have the unspeakable joy, of which Origen writes, in the satisfaction of the God-given desire of our nature to 'become acquainted with the truth of God and the causes of things.' The vision of beauty which we have learnt to admire in Art and Literature pales before the vision of the King. 'Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty' (Isa. xxxiii. 17). It will be our happiness to worship without distraction, to serve with perfect consecration of all our powers, in 'the Kingdom of God which bringeth no regrets.'[1]

*Amen.*

'Amen' means 'so be it.' From the end our thoughts turn back again to the beginning. With hearty loyalty, and reverence we have again pledged our troth to Him whom we acknowledge to be 'a God of truth.' In the words of an early Christian apologist: 'Reason follows faith into the things which are highest and nearest to God.' Assured that our faith is reasonable, we are '*ready always to give answer to every man that asketh a reason concerning the hope that is in us*' (1 Peter iii. 15.) And we look for the fulfilment of the Lord's own promise: 'Every one who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven' (Matt. x. 32).

[1] *Clement of Rome*, Cor. liv.

# CHAPTER VII

## A SHORT HISTORICAL COMMENTARY

The following chapter is offered as an experiment, to connect the two parts of this little book. I have already endeavoured, in my exposition of the teaching of the Creed, to show to what extent beliefs, which were latent, so to speak, in the earliest Christian teaching, were expanded and their higher meaning expressed, as the horizon which bounded the vision of the thinkers became enlarged. We in our day do not teach new truths, but we teach old truths in a new light. I wish to use the faculty of imagination in order to contrast the earlier stage with a later, and (especially in connection with the later) to introduce references to some of the ceremonies of Baptism which formed such an impressive picture before the memories of the newly-sworn soldiers of Christ. With this object I shall endeavour to picture briefly the scene of a Baptism in Rome in the second and in the fourth centuries, while I keep at the same time in view the influence of the manifold political, social, intellectual, and religious movements of the time, on the minds of those taking part in the service.

### The Roman Church, *c.* A.D. 130.

Below the Church of San Clemente, with its interesting frescoes and beautiful inlaid marble choir-stalls and

*ambones* (pulpits), is a buried church from which some of these marbles have been brought up. It is one of the most ancient to be seen in such completeness, carrying back our thoughts to the fifth century. But below this again is a third oratory, which, according to tradition, was the oratory of S. Clement's house. Antiquarians of to-day are more inclined to see in it a cave once dedicated to the service of the Sun God Mithra. The running water, which was needed for solemn lustrations in the worship of Mithra, has now flooded out the whole place, so that it is often impossible to descend into it. But there is no difficulty in the supposition that Christians in early times transformed the sanctuary of Mithra into a sanctuary of Christ, particularly if its secluded position rendered it a safer resort during time of persecution. Either here, then, or in some secluded corner of the catacombs, we can picture a little company of Christians in the first decades of the second century. We have for the rite of Baptism the practically contemporary evidence of Justin Martyr, whose First Apology was written in A.D. 135:

'As many as are persuaded and believe that these things which are taught and said by us are true, and promise that they are able to live thus, are taught to pray and ask God, with fasting, for the forgiveness of their former sins, while we pray and fast with them. Then they are led by us where there is water, and are regenerated after the same manner of regeneration with which we ourselves were regenerated. For they then make their bath in the water, in the name of God the Father, and Lord of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost.

'. . . I should add that the person illuminated washes also in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate; and in the name of the Holy Ghost, who, through the prophets, proclaimed beforehand all things concerning Jesus.'

To add to this graphic account we have a reference in one of the letters of the martyr Ignatius, Bishop of

Antioch, written on his way to death in Rome, referring to the promise which the baptized must make at his entering into the Christian covenant. The same word, meaning 'vowed allegiance,' is used by the heretic Marcion in the passage from which we conclude that the words 'holy Church' stood in the Roman Creed before A.D. 145. It is no great stretch of imagination, therefore, when we picture the catechumen of fifteen years before repeating these words in the solemn confession which was to become the 'password'[1] uniting the Roman Christians with their brethren in other Churches of Italy and of North Africa.[2]

The times were critical. The hostility of the Imperial authorities was due to pressure of circumstances rather than individual caprice and cruelty, such as blackened the memory of a Nero or a Domitian in the preceding century. The Emperor Hadrian himself (A.D. 117-138) was a philosopher who has been credited with the desire to build a temple to Christ. But the old law of the Twelve Tables remained unrepealed: 'No one shall have gods for himself alone at his own pleasure, and men shall not worship in private new or foreign gods unless they be adopted by the State.' If Christians could not claim toleration by submitting, as worshippers of Isis and Serapis had done, to honour the gods of the State first and then obtain the admission of Christ to a place in the national Pantheon, an emperor had no choice but to allow persecution. Whenever an outbreak of popular fury occurred, instigated sometimes by Jews, sometimes by suspicion of secret rites, it was impossible to control it. Trajan could only repress anonymous accusations, and by silence tacitly acquit the Christians on charges of immorality. Hadrian, in a rescript to the Proconsul of Asia neither admitting nor denying that 'the name' was

[1] *Tessera.* [2] Tertullian, *de Praescr.*, 36.

a crime, required proof that the accused 'are acting against the law,' but could not stop popular outbursts.

But a sterner trial had already beset the Christian community in the dangers to faith which resulted from the gravitation to Rome, as the capital of the world, of all manner of speculative teachers. Hither came many of the great Gnostic teachers, who invited them to make terms with pagan ideas, to combine the Christian idea of Redemption with pagan philosophy. Marcion himself, with his prejudice against Jewish law, his enthusiasm for the principle of grace, his pessimism concerning the world, his hopelessness that Christianity could regenerate human life except by means of celibacy and separation from worldly cares, his austere morality, and his moral earnestness, was a dangerous foe. And other teachers had stranger fantasies than he to proclaim, grafting on the same general idea of the evil inherent in matter, and the remoteness of the good God from the visible Creation, speculations which have been well described as 'the metaphysics of wonderland.'

Under these circumstances and before the pressure of competing heresies became intense, the rulers of the Roman Church had wisely enlarged the confession of faith to include more than the mere statement of loyalty to Christ which still sufficed in Asia Minor,[1] or the bare acceptance of Christ's Revelation of the Triune God in the Baptismal Formula which, with the mention of 'forgiveness of sins,' sufficed probably for many years to come in the Church of Jerusalem.[2]

Standing solemnly by the water-side the catechumen would repeat the Creed with some such thoughts passing through his mind as these, with which we may make bold to paraphrase its wording:

[1] *Vide* p. 13. [2] *Vide* p. 31.

'*I believe in one*[1] *God as Father almighty*, I who formerly believed in many gods, deities representing a multitude of human desires and aspirations, now with purified heart worship and love and trust in One Supreme Being, who has revealed Himself as Father of all by creation, all-powerful, all-ruling, taking an intimate interest in the work of His hands, in whom, as the Apostle teaches, "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts xvii. 28).

'*And in Christ Jesus*, through whom and in whom the Father has come near to us, the Anointed Prophet Jesus of Nazareth, *His only Son*, Son in a unique sense,[2] *our Lord*; whom I am proud to serve, even when loyalty to Him conflicts with loyalty to my Emperor. Before the Emperor's statue I have often burnt the incense which expresses my devotion, but now I can only render to Cæsar the things which belong to Cæsar, not the honour which belongs to Christ, my Master, as God.[3] *Who was born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary.* In the words of the martyr Ignatius: "Hidden from the prince of this world were the virginity of Mary and her child-bearing, and likewise also the death of the Lord—three mysteries to be cried aloud—the which were wrought in the silence of God."[4]

'*Who under Pontius Pilate was crucified and buried.* I have read in the *Annals* of Tacitus[5] that "Christ, the author of that name, was put to death by the procurator Pontius Pilate, in the reign of Tiberius." An unjust sentence! Our procurator was afraid of the turbulent Jews, and sacrificed the Lord to their hatred. *The third day He rose again from the dead.* Death could not bind Him. I have read in the Apostle Paul's letter to us, "declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead," and have heard how His appearing to Paul converted him. *Having ascended into heaven He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, from whence He is coming to judge living and dead.*

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[1] I have shown above that the Old Roman Creed probably included this word at this period, p. 29. [2] Swete.

[3] Cf. the confession of Polycarp who, when asked to revile Christ that he might be set free, answered, 'Fourscore and six years have I served Him, and He hath done me no wrong. How, then, can I speak evil of my King who saved me?'

[4] *Ad Eph.*, p. 19. [5] *Annal.*, xv. 44.

'*And in the Holy Ghost.* I have heard the teaching of Clement: "Have we not one God, and one Christ, and one Spirit of grace, which was poured out upon us?"[1] and how he called the Spirit "the faith and hope of the elect."[2] He has led me to offer myself as a catechumen, and the Apostle Paul has taught me: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God."[3] I pray that when I have been initiated into the mysteries of *the holy Church*, I may receive His seal in "the laying on of the hand."[4] I look for *the remission of* my *sins*. Other washings, the solemn lustrations of the disciples of Mithra, have never yet freed my soul from the chains of evil habit. When I received the dread bath in the blood of the bull, and imagined myself reborn for eternity and freed from sin's guilt, I was not freed from sin's power. I have learnt that the blood of bulls cannot take away sins. While I was yet a sinner Christ died for me. May His Holy Spirit guard me in holy fellowship and bring me to *the resurrection of the flesh* in the spiritual body in which I hope to stand before Him as my Judge, and enter into peace.'

The second century was a time when any man making this profession took his life in his hands. But the faith that does not shrink from such self-sacrifice is the faith that overcomes the world. And when we turn from the second century to the fourth we are almost inclined to say that the Church lost more than it gained through toleration. The temptation to worldliness which proved the ruin of so many scheming ecclesiastics, when it was possible both for orthodox and unorthodox Churchmen to rise to high places in the Imperial Court, was resisted by the great minds which most profoundly influenced the thought of later generations, by an Athanasius, an Ambrose, an Augustine. In every such case, when S. Athanasius fled again and again to the desert, when S. Ambrose withstood the malice of Justina, or the wrath

[1] Cor. xlvi. 6. [2] *Ib.* lviii. 2. [3] Rom. viii. 14.

[4] Heb. vi. 2. Cf. Acts, viii. 17. The singular 'hand' in the old ecclesiastical phrase distinguished Confirmation from Ordination.

of Theodosius, when S. Augustine was ready as a new convert to share any fate that might befall his teacher, it was the same spirit of sacrifice which kept the faith.

### The Roman Church, A.D. 385.

The Church in Rome during the pontificate of Damasus (366-384) was exposed to special danger from the worldliness of many wealthy Christians. Heathenism had still a strong following of cultured and, according to their lights, very religious people. The best of them were Neo-Platonists, and enjoyed the fruit of a very noble philosophy, while their morality, judged by the Christian standard, was above suspicion. We can imagine the joy and interest which was stirred in the heart of the Christian community when it was known that one of the most celebrated of Neo-Platonist teachers in Rome, Marius Victorinus, the African, had become a candidate for Holy Baptism. So great was his popularity that a statue had even been erected to him in the Forum of Trajan. The wrench which it cost him to break with old associations and intimates must have been great.

Preparation for Baptism in the fourth century consisted of a series of instructions and exercises which were called *scrutinies*. In the seventh century they began in the third week in Lent and were seven in number. We do not know if this formal number had been fixed from the fourth century, but we can with confidence reconstruct the order of the final ceremonies, which included the solemn delivery of the Creed, and also (in Rome) a summary of the Christian Law. This was called 'The Opening of the Ears.' Four pages of the four Gospels were read and explained. Then the candidates were presented to the Bishop or Priest, who asked in what language they confessed, and directed that they should

be taught the Creed in Greek or Latin, as the case might be. We have many sermons from the pen of S. Augustine and others which were delivered at this ceremony. The Lord's Prayer was taught in the same way with a running commentary. The last scrutiny took place in the afternoon of Saturday in Holy Week. After exorcism of Satan, and the anointing of the lips of the candidates, each was required to 'renounce Satan, his works, and his pomps.' Then each, ascending a platform in the sight of the great congregation, recited the Creed. Baptism was administered in the evening at the solemn Vigil of Easter.

S. Augustine's words speak for themselves (*Conf.* bk. viii.):

"2. Surely it is a glorious proof of Thy grace, which ought to be confessed unto Thee, when we consider how that old man, most learned, most skilled in all liberal sciences, who had read, criticised, explained so many works of philosophy, who had been the tutor of so many illustrious senators, who for distinguished service in a high office, which the citizens of this world regard as eminent, had deserved and received a statue in the Roman Forum, who, up to advanced age, had been a worshipper of idols, a communicant of godless rites . . . did not blush to become the child of Thy Christ, the babe of Thy font.

'5. When the hour arrived for making the public profession of faith, which at Rome is made by those who are about to enter into Thy grace from a platform, in full sight of the faithful people, in a set form of words repeated by heart, the presbyters . . . would have given Victorinus leave to make his profession in private, this being not unusual in the case of persons who had reason for shrinking from so trying an ordeal, but he deliberately chose to profess his salvation in the sight of the holy congregation. For there was no salvation in the rhetoric which he had taught; yet he had professed that openly. Why, then, should he shrink from naming Thy Word before the sheep of Thy flock, when he had not shrunk from uttering his own words before troops of madmen?

'6. And so, when he mounted the platform to deliver his pro-

fession, all who knew him uttered his name with a cry of delight. And who was there that knew him not? And so a whisper was heard running all round that jubilant assembly: "Victorinus! Victorinus!" Sudden was the sound of exultation, when they saw him; sudden was the hush of attention, that they might hear. He repeated the true faith with unfaltering confidence, and all would have clasped him to their hearts, yea, they did clasp him to their hearts with the arms of love and joy.'

The faith which Victorinus professed was the same creed, which we traced back to the early years of the second century, with the single omission of the word *One* in the first article. It is difficult to imagine that any one would feel that the later additions to the form have added any new doctrine to the faith so succinctly summarised. Whatever may be the final verdict of criticism as to the locality where the final form was reached, we are still entitled to say that: 'Our Apostles' Creed is the Old Roman Creed of the second century, sanctified by continuous usage of eighteen hundred years in its Mother Church like a precious jewel which in the new generation has been recut and polished, that it may reflect new beauties of incommunicable light.'[1]

## Conclusion.

My little book will be like an arrow that has missed its mark if any of my readers should be content to close it and read no more. The history of the Creed has roused but a languid interest in England, though during the past twenty years it has proved to be a most fruitful subject for research, and the frequent discoveries of new creed-forms have been chronicled on the Continent with an enthusiasm which puts us to shame. We are lacking, perhaps, in the virtue of perseverance which is required by those who will work through the stores of material

[1] *Introd. to Creeds*, p. 240.

collected and analysed in the monumental work of Dr. Kattenbusch on the Apostles' Creed with its 1470 pages.

We take, however, a keener interest in the teaching of the Creed. A tradition of Bishop Pearson survives, whose Exposition is one of the most characteristic works of Anglican theology. He knew little about the history and but few of the older creed-forms, but his exhaustive notes are still a storehouse of learning from which we may discover what the early Christian fathers thought on the great subjects with which the Creed deals. With the exception of a few paragraphs, his exposition holds good to-day. Alas, we live in an age of little books, and devout laymen are not so ready as their ancestors to undertake the task of reading Pearson. My short commentary is not offered to save them the trouble, but to train them, if it may be, for the toil. Of course there are new problems, which had not arisen on Pearson's horizon, that perplex us. For their solution I must refer my readers to the small library of books which I have catalogued below. In particular I would commend Bishop Harvey Goodwin's *Foundations of the Creed,* in which he endeavours to bring Pearson up to date. Another helpful book is Bishop Westcott's *Historic Faith.* Both books will help the reader to appreciate Pearson with his masculine style, his strong common-sense, his profound reverence. Not hastily did the great theologian build his porch to the Temple of Truth, through which, when we desire to escape from the strife of tongues and the worry of modern life, we may pass to worship. After all the chief use of a creed is not for intellectual but for spiritual ends. 'This is the Catholic Faith, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity,' not that we define or dogmatise unduly. As a summary of catechetical instruction the Creed might seem

like scaffolding which might be taken down when its work was done. But as a great act of adoration it serves equally for old men and children, helping all to lift up their hearts to the Lord. Many great teachers of the primitive Church laid stress on the use of the Creed in private devotion. Such use, if it were more common to-day, would tend incalculably to strengthen faith, and would make the profession of the great congregation a solemn reality such as it ought to be. The words of Niceta of Remesiana deserve to be quoted in illustration of this point:

'Accordingly, beloved, whether you walk or sit, or work, or sleep, or watch, let this health-giving confession be pondered in your hearts. Be your mind ever in heaven, your hope in the resurrection, your longing in the promise. Let the cross of Christ and His glorious Passion be set forth with confidence, and so often as the enemy tickle your mind with fear, or avarice, or lust, or anger, reply to him with threatening, saying: "I have both renounced and will renounce thee together with thy works and thy angels, because I have believed in the living God and His Son, signed by whose Spirit I have learnt to fear not even death." So shall the hand of God protect you, so shall the Holy Spirit of Christ guard your entrance from henceforth and for ever; when meditating on Christ you say by turns: Brothers, whether we wake or sleep, let us live together with Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.'

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# INDEX